



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: **Huggins, George M.**) U.S. Appl. No. **10/781,483**
)
Patent No.: **Unknown**) Filed: **February 17, 2004**
)
Issue Date: **Unknown**)
)
For: **Pickup Tailgate Loading**)
Ramp)

Mail Stop Petition
Commissioner of Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

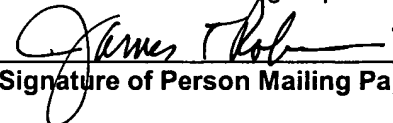
TRANSMITTAL OF PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR PATENT
ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.137b

CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.8a

I hereby certify that this TRANSMITTAL and the documents referred to as enclosed therein are being deposited with the United States Postal Service on this 8th day of **August, 2005** in a first class envelope with sufficient postage addressed to: Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

James T. Robinson

Name of Person Mailing Paper


Signature of Person Mailing Paper

Transmitted herewith for filing is the patent application of

Inventor: **George M. Huggins**

For: **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**

\$DAC
IFW

1. Papers Filed February 17, 2004 as follows:

Papers From Parent Application Enclosed with CIP Application:

Original application:

8	Pages of Specification
2	Pages of Claims
1	Page of Abstract
3	Sheets of Formal Drawings
2	Pages – Declaration for Utility or Design
1	Pages – “Prior Art Cited by Applicant”
1	Page – Prior Art Statement
1	Page – Fee Transmittal
1	Page – Utility Patent Application Transmittal

CIP Application Documents, including:

6	Pages of Continuation-in-part Application Filing
12	Pages of New Specification
2	Pages of New Claims (1 claim)
1	Page of Abstract
10	Sheets of NEW formal drawings (Figures '1-17)
3	Pages of Combined Declaration & Power of Attorney
2	Pages of Preliminary Amendment
2	Pages of PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL (APPLICANT'S AGE)
1	Receipt verification post card
1	Check No. 2219 for \$385.00 (small entity filing fee)

2. Petition For Revival Of Patent Abandoned Unintentionally Under 37 CFR 1.137b

3. Drawings

- Formal drawings filed with CIP Application.

4. Other Documents Enclosed

- Marked-up substitute specification, claims, and abstract (changes highlighted).
- Substitute specification, claims, and abstract (clean copy).
- INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (2 pages), with following attachments:
 - PTO Form/SB/08A (6 pages)

- Canadian Patent Document No. 2,219,754
- Canadian Patent Document No. 2,028,014
- PTO Form/SB/08B
- Check Number 2873 in the amount of \$750.00.
- Receipt verification postcard.

5. Fee Payment Being Made At This Time

Enclosed is the Filing Fee (\$750.00).

Total fees enclosed: \$750.00

6. Method of Payment of Fees

Check No. 2873 in the amount of **\$750.00**.

Please refund any overpayment to applicant's attorney.

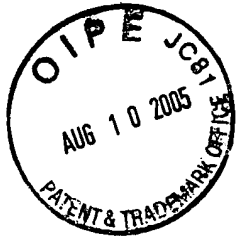
Dated: August 8, 2005



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ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Applicant:	Huggins, George M.)	U.S. Appl. No. 10/781,483
Patent No.:	Unknown)	Filed: February 17, 2004
Issue Date:	Unknown)	
For:	Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp)	

Mail Stop Petition
Commissioner of Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR PATENT ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37.CFR 1.137b

The above identified application became abandoned for failure to file a timely and proper reply to an OFFICE ACTION mailed by the United States Patent & Trademark on October 20, 2004 Office. The date of abandonment was January 20, 2005.

We are enclosing the following:

1. **Check No. 2873** in the amount of **\$750.00** for the PETITION FEE under 37 CFR 1.17(m).

Status remains **small entity**. **\$750.00**
2. A reply to the above noted OFFICE ACTION is *NOT* enclosed herewith for the reasons set forth below. See "Remarks."
3. Since this utility patent application was filed after June 8, 1995, no TERMINAL DISCLAIMER is required.
4. RECEIPT VERIFICATION POST CARD is enclosed herewith.
5. **OVERPAYMENT.** As to any overpayment made please send refund check.

PETITION FOR REVIVAL
OF UNINTENTIONALLY ABANDONED APPLICATION
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. HUG107

U.S. PATENT APPLICATION NUMBER 10/781,483
GEORGE M. HUGGINS, INVENTOR
PAGE 1 OF 4

6. **STATEMENT.** The entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the required reply until the filing of a grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional.

REMARKS

Information Disclosure Statement

On page 2 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner noted that the information disclosure statement filed February 17, 2004 fails to comply with provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. 1.98 and MPEP § 609 because there are not references cited. Enclosed with this Petition is an Information Disclosure Statement which includes the prior art from the parent application (S/N 09/750,498), together with additional prior art found by the applicant.

Drawings

On page 2 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner objected to the drawings "because the new drawing alluded to in papers filed on February 17, 2004 are not in the file." A rigorous search of applicant's attorney's files indicates that a completely new set of drawings accompanied the CIP application filed February 17, 2004. Prior to filing the CIP application on February 17, 2004, 3 complete sets of documents mailed to the USPTO were made by applicant's attorney (for attorney's file, for the client, and for the reading file). Each set appears to be complete. Thus it appears the originals from which the copies were made were sent to the USPTO in a single packet. We are enclosing a complete set of documents filed in the USPTO on February 17, 2004.

It is respectfully suggested that the examiner may have mistakenly considered the drawings provided in the attachment containing documents from the parent application. The parent application contained 3 sheets of drawings and 9 figures. In the alternative, perhaps the missing drawings were misplaced within the USPTO.

Still referring to page 2 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner's comments regarding an "amended" figure number appears to be directed to something other than applicant's CIP application filed February 17, 2004.

In the Preliminary Amendment filed February 17, 2004, applicant stated as follows:

By the present amendment, all claims in the parent application have been canceled. New claim 1 has been added. Only a single claim is present in the application, as amended. Applicant respectfully requests that claim 1 be allowed at an early date.

In the Drawings. 10 sheets of drawings include 12 new Figures. Each figure contains some new matter not contained in the original application.

Specification

On page 3 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner objected to the disclosure because "no marked-up copy of the substitute specification is present." In the Preliminary Amendment included in applicant's CIP filing, applicant stated as follows:

In the specification. The new specification adds references to new FIGS. 1-17 in both the Brief Description of the Drawings and also in the Detailed Description.

Applicant is enclosing herewith a marked-up copy of the substitute specification, together with a clean copy of the substitute specification.

Applicant's marked-up copy of the specification includes a marked-up claim not contained in the parent application.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102(b)

On page 3 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner rejected Claim 1 as being anticipated by McCleary (US 5,133,584). In the Preliminary Amendment included in applicant's CIP filing, applicant stated as follows:

In the claims. The proposed new claim is drawn to a **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**.

Response to Amendment

On page 4 of the Office Action mailed October 20, 2004, the examiner noted as follows:

Not all portions of the preliminary amendment have been forwarded to the office. There is no copy of the new figures in the application file. Also the claims present originally had a total of seven claims, per the preliminary amendment claims 2-7 have been cancelled. There is no marked-up copy of the claims or of the new specification. As they are said to be enclosed with the letter both the claims and the specification in the file will be considered to be those copies at this time. A marked up copy of the specification and claims are required in response to this action. A copy of the claim that is presently under examination is presented below.

The claim presented by the examiner is, in fact, claim 1 from the original application *and not from the CIP application*.

Request for Examination *Ab Initio*

In summary, it appears the claim of applicant's CIP application has not been examined to date. Therefore, in addition to granting applicant's PETITION TO REVIVE UNINTENTIONALLY ABANDONED APPLICATION, applicant further requests an examination *ab initio* of the claim contained in applicant's CIP application filed February 17, 2004.

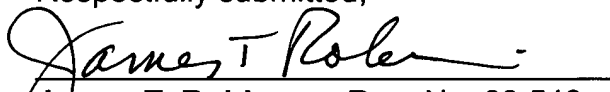
In the alternative, applicant requests granting of applicant's PETITION TO REVIVE UNINTENTIONALLY ABANDONED APPLICATION and an opportunity to file a REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (formerly a CONTINUED PROSECUTION APPLICATION) based on the reinstated CIP application.

Request for Waiver of Fee under 37 CFR 1.17(m)

Due to the circumstances in this case, as set forth above, applicant respectfully waives of the fee in the interests of justice.

Date: August 8, 2005

Respectfully submitted,


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222 East Main Street
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Telephone (405) 292-1911
Facsimile (405) 321-1104

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

Best Available Copy



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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No. **HUG107**

Anticipated Classification of this Application:

Class: **XXX** Subclass: **XXXXXX**

S/N:

Prior Application: **09/750,498**

Examiner: **Fox, C.**

Art Unit: **3652**

Mail Stop PATENT APPLICATION
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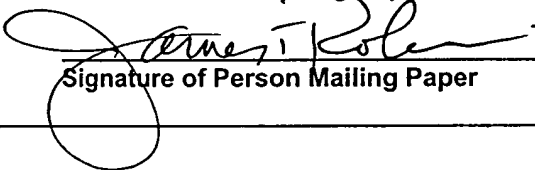
CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION
FILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.53(b) and 1.78(a)

CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.10

I hereby certify that this CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION FILING and the documents referred to as enclosed therein are being deposited with the United States Postal Service on this 17th day of February, 2004, in an envelope as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Mailing Label Number EL-886-358-148-US addressed to: Mail Stop PATENT APPLICATION, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 Washington, D.C. 20231.

James T. Robinson

Name of Person Mailing Paper


Signature of Person Mailing Paper

GEORGE HUGGINS, INVENTOR
EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO. EL-886-358-148-US
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. HUG107

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION FILING
PAGE 1 OF 6

1. Type of Application

This is a request for filing a continuation-in-part application, under 37 CFR 1.53(B) and 1.78(a), of a pending prior application S/N 09/750,498, filed on December 29, 2000, for a:

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP

I hereby verify that the attached papers are a true copy of what is shown in my records to be a part of the above-identified prior application.

The copies of the papers of the prior application which are attached are as follows:

- New Application Transmittal.
- United States Patent Application for **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**, including 14 pages (8 pages specification, 2 pages claims, and 1 page Abstract) plus 3 sheets of drawings.
- Patent Application Fee Determination Record
- COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY.

PARTICULARS OF PRIOR APPLICATION

- A. Application Serial No.: **09/750,498**
Date filed: **December 29, 2000**
- B. Title as originally filed: **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**
Title as last amended: **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**
- C. Name of applicants as originally filed and as last amended:

George M. Huggins

The current address of the inventor is as follows:

**1678 Country Street 2982
Blanchard, OK 73010**

A PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR PATENT ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.137(B) was filed this date by separate mail, and copy is attached herewith.

2. Inventorship Statement

(a) This application discloses and claims new subject matter not disclosed in the prior application whose particulars are set out above and the inventor in this application is the same.

(b) The inventorship for all the claims in this application is the same.

3. Declaration or Oath

A COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY is enclosed.

4. Identification of Claims for Prosecution

The current application includes a new specification and a single claim. The fees to be charged are for new independent claim 1.

5. Fee Calculation (37 CFR 1.16)

Claims For Fee Calculation

Number filed 37 CFR 1.16(a)	Number Extra Rate			Basic Fee
				\$ 385
Total claims 1 - 3 =	0	x	\$43	- 0 -
Independent Claims 1 - 20 =	0	x	\$9	-- 0 -
Multiple Independent Claims	0	x	\$145	- 0 -
FILING FEE TOTAL				\$ 385

6. Petition for Suspension of Prosecution for Time Necessary to File an Amendment

None filed.

GEORGE HUGGINS, INVENTOR
EXPRESS MAIL LABEL No. EL-886-358-148-US
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET No. HUG107

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION FILING
PAGE 3 OF 6

7. Small Entity Statement

Small entity status is claimed.

Reduced Filing Fee **\$ 385**

8. Fee Payment Being Made At This Time

Filing fee attached in the amount of: **\$ 385**

TOTAL FEE ENCLOSED **\$ 385**

9. Method of Payment of Fees

Check number **2219** in the amount of **\$385.00** is enclosed.

10. Authorization to Charge Additional Fees

Not applicable.

11. Instructions as to Overpayment

Refund any overpayment to:

**James T. Robinson
222 East Main Street
Norman, OK 73069-1303**

12. Priority

No priority based on foreign filing is being claimed.

13. Relate Back – 35 U.S.C. 120

The specification, as amended by PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT filed herewith, includes, before the first line, the sentence:

"This is a continuation-in-part of co-pending application Serial No. 09/750,498 filed on December 29, 2000."

14. Assignment

None.

15. Power Of Attorney

The power of attorney in the prior application is to:

**James T. Robinson
Registration No. 33,548**

Send correspondence to:

**James T. Robinson
222 East Main Street
Norman, OK 73069-1303**

Direct telephone calls to:

**James T. Robinson
(405) 292-1911**

A COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY is enclosed.

16. Maintenance of Co-pendency of Prior Application

The parent application was unintentionally abandoned. A PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR PATENT ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.137(B) is being filed simultaneously herewith.

17. Conditional Petitions for Extension of Time in Prior Applications

None.

18. Abandonment of Prior Application

Do **NOT** abandon the parent application.

19. Information Disclosure Statement

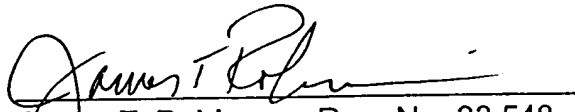
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT is NOT submitted herewith.

20. Other Papers Enclosed

- PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT (2 pages) is enclosed.
- Substitute specification (12 pages) is enclosed.
- A new page of Claims (2 pages containing 1 independent claim) is enclosed.
- A new Abstract (1 page) is enclosed.
- 10 sheets of *formal* drawings are enclosed.
- A copy of the PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR PATENT ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.137(B), filed this date, is attached.
- A receipt verification post card is enclosed.
- A PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL BECAUSE OF APPLICANT'S AGE is enclosed.

21. ATTORNEY'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application of any parent issuing thereon.



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ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp

George M. Huggins, Inventor

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

[0001] This is a continuation-in-part of co-pending application Serial No. 09/750,498 filed on December 29, 2000. This invention relates to a pickup tailgate loading ramp, and more particularly, but not by way of limitation, to a loading ramp for use in conjunction with a pickup truck, wherein the tailgate ramp of the present invention replaces the normal pickup truck tailgate. The tailgate ramp includes hinge assemblies and latching assemblies which cooperate with existing tailgate hardware to secure the tailgate ramp to the pickup truck. The terms pickup tailgate loading ramp and tailgate ramp, as used herein, refer to applicant's invention.

2. Discussion

[0002] Pickup trucks are well known, and their popularity continues to grow. They are used to carry a variety of cargo, including outdoor power equipment such as lawnmowers, garden tractors, all terrain vehicles, and golf carts. It is difficult, if not impossible, to load a riding lawnmower or an all terrain vehicle into the bed of a pickup truck when the truck is equipped with original equipment tailgate (sometimes also referred to as an endgate).

[0003] While ramps that also serve as tailgates are known for use on pickup trucks, the currently existing products have various disadvantages. Different pickup truck manufacturers use different latch mechanisms and different hinge assemblies for tailgates of different widths. Tailgate ramps were largely custom built for each model of each pickup truck in order to properly locate the locking mechanism at a proper height.

[0004] Moreover, most convertible endgates were relatively heavy, difficult to attach or remove, and difficult to deploy in a load position. Many of the latch mechanisms for tailgate ramps were difficult to operate.

[0005] Although pickup tailgate ramps are known in the art, until now no tailgate ramp has been suited both for supporting substantial loads such as all terrain vehicles, garden tractors, golf carts, and other recreational devices and also for easy installation and removal.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] Applicant's invention provides a combination tailgate and loading ramp for pickup trucks. A rectangular tailgate section is rigidly attached to an upper ramp section, whose lower end is pivotally attached to a linkage member. A support member and a lower ramp section are also attached to the linkage member to form a strong but lightweight ramp from the road surface to the bed of the pickup truck.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] Figure 1 shows the pickup tailgate loading ramp according to the present wherein the tailgate ramp is deployed in a vertical (i.e., stored) position.

[0008] Figure 2 shows the pickup tailgate loading ramp shown in Figure 1 wherein the tailgate ramp is deployed in a load position.

[0009] Figure 3 is an enlarged detailed view of the pickup tailgate loading ramp shown in Figures 1 and 2.

[0010] Figure 4 is a view of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3 wherein the left folding ramp assembly and the right folding ramp assembly are exploded upwardly away from the tailgate assembly.

[0011] Figure 5 is a top plan view of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3.

[0012] Figure 6 is a rear plan view of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3 from behind the pickup truck.

[0013] Figure 7 is a bottom plan view of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3.

[0014] Figure 8 is a left plan view of the left folding ramp assembly.

[0015] Figure 9 is a right plan view of the right folding ramp assembly.

[0016] Figure 10 is a front plan view of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3.

[0017] Figure 11 is an exploded view of the left folding ramp assembly and the right folding ramp assembly.

[0018] Figure 12 is a closeup view of the right latch assembly of the tailgate ramp shown in Figures 1-3.

[0019] Figure 13 is an exploded view of the right latch assembly shown in Figure 12.

[0020] Figure 14 is an exploded view of the tailgate assembly, the left latch assembly, the right latch assembly, the left hinge assembly, and the right hinge assembly, all as shown in Figures 1-3, together with alternate latch assemblies and alternate hinge assemblies according to the present invention.

[0021] Figure 15 shows still another latch assembly according to the present invention.

[0022] Figure 16 is an enlarged view of the latch assembly of Figure 15 with a portion of the tailgate assembly cut away.

[0023] Figure 17 illustrates the movement of the tailgate ramp of Figures 1-3 from the vertical (i.e., stored) position shown in Figure 1 to the load position shown in Figure 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0024] In the following description of the invention, like numerals and characters designate like elements throughout the figures of the drawings.

[0025] Referring now to the drawings generally and to Figure 1 in particular, a pickup tailgate loading ramp 50 in accordance with the present invention is mounted on the pickup truck T resting on a road surface S using existing tailgate hardware (not shown). The tailgate ramp 50 includes a tailgate assembly 52, a left folding ramp assembly 54, a right folding ramp assembly 56, a left latch assembly 58, a right latch assembly 60, a left hinge assembly 62, and a right hinge assembly 64. The tailgate ramp 50 of Figure 1 is shown in the vertical (i.e., storage) position.

[0026] Referring now to Figure 2, the tailgate loading ramp 50 is deployed in a load position so that the left folding ramp assembly 54 and the right folding ramp assembly 56 cooperate with the tailgate assembly 52 to create a continuous path from the surface S to the bed B of the pickup truck T. U-shaped support members 70 are attached to the left folding ramp assembly 54 and the right folding ramp assembly 56 (see Figure 3 and Figure 17).

[0027] Referring now to Figure 3, the tailgate loading ramp 50 is shown detached from the pickup truck T. The tailgate assembly 52 includes a horizontal rail 80 and a parallel horizontal rail 82 interconnected by left end rail 84 and right end rail 86, having lower end portions 88, 90, respectively. The left latch assembly 58 is attached to the left end rail 84 and the right latch assembly 60 is attached to the right end rail 86. The left latch assembly 58 and the right latch assembly 60 engage existing tailgate latching pins P (see Figure 2, only one shown) to secure the tailgate loading ramp 50 in the vertical position.

[0028] Still referring to Figure 3, the left hinge assembly 62 is attached to the horizontal rail 80 adjacent the lower end portion 88 of the left end rail 84. The right hinge assembly 64 is attached to the horizontal rail 80 adjacent the lower end portion 90 of the right end rail 86. The left and right hinge assemblies, 62, 64, pivotally engage hinge pins P (now shown), standard tailgate attachment hardware located adjacent the bed B of the pickup truck T.

[0029] Still referring to Figure 3, the left folding ramp assembly 54 includes an upper ramp section 92 attached at one end to a left end portion 94 of the parallel horizontal rail 82 (see Figures 4, 6, 10, and 14). The right folding ramp assembly 56 includes an upper

ramp section 96 attached at one end to a right end portion 98 of the parallel horizontal rail 82 (see Figures 4, 6, 10, and 14). As used with respect to the folding ramp assemblies 54, 56, the term upper is used to indicate the structure so described is higher in elevation (and nearer the bed B of the pickup truck T) when the tailgate loading ramp 50 is deployed in the load position. Similarly, the term lower is used to indicate the structure so described is lower in elevation (and nearer the surface S on which the pickup truck T rests) when the tailgate loading ramp 50 is deployed in the load position.

[0030] Still referring to Figure 3, the other end of each of the upper ramp sections 92, 96 is pivotally attached to a pair of linkages 100. Each linkage 100 has an upper portion 102, an intermediate portion 104, and a lower portion 106. Each of the upper ramp sections 92, 96 has an upper portion 108 and a lower portion 110. The ends of the upper ramp sections 92, 96 adjacent the upper portions 108 of the upper ramp sections 92, 96 are rigidly connected to the parallel horizontal rail 82. The other ends of the upper ramp sections 92, 96, adjacent the lower portions 110 of the upper ramp sections 92, 96, are pivotally attached to the linkages 100 adjacent the upper portion of linkage 102.

[0031] Still referring to Figure 3, the ends of each of the U-shaped support members 70 are pivotally attached to the linkages 100 in the intermediate portion 104 of the linkages 100 by fasteners 118.

[0032] Still referring to Figure 3, each folding ramp section 54, 56 includes a lower ramp section 112 having an upper end 114 and a lower end 116. The upper end 114 of each lower ramp section 112 is attached to two linkages 100 adjacent the lower portions

of linkage 106 of the linkages 100. The lower end 116 of each lower ramp section 112 rests on the surface S when the tailgate ramp 50 is deployed in the load position.

[0033] Referring now to Figures 4-10, the left upper ramp section 92 and the right upper ramp section 96 are exploded upwardly from the parallel horizontal rail 82. Projections 120 extending from the upper end portions 108 of the upper ramp sections 54, 56 are received through holes 122 in the parallel horizontal rail 82 and disposed within hollow frame members 124 of the tailgate assembly 52. When the projections 120 are disposed within the hollow frame members 124, horizontal bores 126 in the projections 120 mate with throughways 128 in the hollow frame members 124. Pins 130 secure the upper ramp sections 92, 96 to the tailgate assembly 52. Each fastener 130 extends through a throughway 128 and through the horizontal bore 126 in the projection 120.

[0034] Still referring to Figures 4-10, holders 132 secure lower ramp sections 112 to the upper ramp sections 92, 96 when the tailgate ramp 50 is in the vertical (i.e., stored) position (see Figures 8 and 9).

[0035] Still referring to Figures 4-10, the left hinge assembly 62 includes a hollow cylindrical member 134 which receives a left hinge pin attached to the left side of the pickup truck T adjacent the bed B. The right hinge assembly 64 includes a partially cutaway cylindrical member 136 which mates with a mating right hinge pin attached to the right side of the pickup truck T adjacent the bed B.

[0036] The hinge pin assemblies 62, 64 according to the present invention match the factory equipment on the pickup truck T. It will be understood by one skilled in the art that a variety of mating configurations are known in the art. Applicant's invention is adaptable

for use with any mating configuration which permits a tailgate to be easily removed and installed.

[0037] Referring now to Figures 8 and 9, an arrow A shows the direction of movement, in concert, of the left upper ramp portion 92 and the right upper ramp portion 96 as to raise the holder 132 which secures the

[0038] Referring now to Figure 11, the folding ramp assemblies of the present invention are shown in exploded view. Each linkage 100 has a bore 140 located adjacent the upper portion 102 of the linkage 100, a bore 142 located in the intermediate portion 104 of the linkage 100, and a bore 144 located adjacent the lower portion 106 of the linkage 100. The upper ramp section 92 is attached to two linkages 100 by means of fasteners 118 disposed through the bores 140 of two linkages 100 and through bores 150 located adjacent the upper portion 108 of the upper ramp section 92. Likewise the upper ramp section 96 is attached to two linkages 100 by fasteners 118 disposed through the bores 140 of the two linkages 100 and through bores 150 located adjacent the upper portion 108 of the upper ramp section 96.

[0039] Each of the U-shaped support members 70 is attached to two linkages 100 by fasteners 118 disposed through the bores 142 located in the intermediate portions 104 of the two linkages 100 and through bores 152 adjacent the ends of the U-shaped support members 70.

[0040] Each of the lower ramp sections 112 is attached to two linkages 100 by fasteners 118 disposed through the bores 144 located adjacent the lower portion of the

linkages 100 and through bores 154 adjacent the upper ends 114 of the lower ramp sections 112.

[0041] Referring now to Figures 12 and 13, the right latch assembly 60 according to the present invention is attached to the right end rail 86 of the tailgate assembly 52. A spring-biased latching arm 170 is attached to a latch support 172 attached to the right end rail 86 of the tailgate assembly 52 by latch support mounting security bolts 174. The spring-biased latching arm 170 rocks on a pivot bolt 176 which extends through a biasing spring 178 and through a bore 180 in the latching arm 170, and through a bore 182 in the latch support 172. One end 184 of the latching arm 170 includes a cutout 186 which engages the tailgate latching pin P provided as standard equipment on the pickup truck T (see Figure 2). The other end 188 of the latching arm 170 includes a bore 190 which mates with a bore 192 in a tab portion 194 of the latch support 172 when the tailgate ramp 50 according to the present invention is in the vertical (i.e., storage) position. The latch support 172 is mounted at a convenient location along arrow B on the right end rail 86 of the tailgate assembly 52.

[0042] Referring now to Figure 14, the left hinge assembly 62 consists of a hollow cylindrical member 134 disposed within a first tubular member 200 attached to the horizontal rail 80 of the tailgate assembly 52. The cylindrical member 134 has a transverse bore 202 which mates with a transverse bore 204 in the tubular member 200. A fastener 206 extends through the cylindrical member transverse bore 202 and the mating tubular member transverse bore 204 and thereby secures the hollow cylindrical member 134 within the tubular member 200.

[0043] Still referring to Figure 14, the right latch assembly 64 consists of a partially cutaway hollow cylindrical member 136 secured in a second tubular member 208 attached to the horizontal rail 80 distal from the tubular member 200.

[0044] Still referring to Figure 14, a hollow cylindrical member 234 having a length less than the length of the hollow cylindrical member 134 and a partially cutaway hollow cylindrical member 236 having a length less than the length of the partially cutaway hollow cylindrical member 136 permits the tailgate assembly 52 to be adapted for use in a pickup truck having a narrower tailgate width.

[0045] Ford, General Motors, and Daimler-Chrysler pickup trucks for model years 1999 through 2004 have similar tailgate latching mechanisms and similar hinge assemblies, but the position of the latching pin P and the width of the tailgate vary between the three manufacturers. It will be understood by one skilled in the art that the latch assembly 58, 60 and the hinge assembly 62, 64 of the present invention permit the adaptation of a single tailgate assembly 52 to any of the three manufacturers.

[0046] Still referring to Figure 14, another latch support 272 includes a tab 292 having a bore 294 wherein the tab 292 is located near the bottom of the latch support 272. The latch support 272 facilitates the adaptation of the tailgate ramp 50 to a changed location of the latch pin P without drilling additional holes in the end rail 86 of the tailgate assembly 52.

[0047] Still referring to Figure 14, another latch assembly 360 permits use of the tailgate assembly 52 of the present invention with Ford, General Motors, and Daimler-Chrysler pickup trucks for model years prior to 1999. A latch support 370 containing a

spring-loaded latch pin 372 is mounted on the rail 86 of the tailgate assembly 52. A spring 374 biases the latch pin 372 in a distended position to engage a standard latch pin receiver in the pickup truck. A thumb lever 376 permits temporary disengagement of the latch pin 372 from the latch pin receiver for deployment of the tailgate ramp 50 in the load position. A backstop 378 is secured to the latch support 370 by fasteners 380 to limit travel of the latch pin 372 in the biased direction.

[0048] Referring now to Figures 15 and 16, shown therein is another latch assembly 400 for use according to the present tailgate ramp invention in Ford, General Motors, and Daimler-Chrysler pickup trucks for model years prior to 1999. A spring-loaded pull plunger 402 is housed in a cylindrical barrel 404. A spring 406 biases the plunger 402 in an extended position so the plunger 402 is disposed within the standard-equipment pickup truck latch pin receiver. A finger loop 408 permits manual withdrawal of the plunger 402 from the latch pin receiver.

[0049] Referring now to Figure 17, a left plan view of the tailgate ramp according to the present invention shows the operation of applicant's invention. Movement of the lower ramp section 112 along arrow A permits disengagement of the holder 132 from the upper ramp section 92. As the lower ramp section 112 is pulled outwardly and downward, the U-shaped support member 50, the upper ramp section 92, and the lower ramp section 112 pivot at their points of attachment to the linkage 100 so that, when fully extended, the tailgate ramp 50 of the present invention provides a ramp from the road surface S to the bed B of the pickup truck T. The U-shaped support member 70 provides support for both

the upper ramp section 92 and the lower ramp section 112 by virtue of their common connection to different points of attachment on the linkage 100.

[0050] The foregoing descriptions of specific embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration and description. They are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed, and obviously many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical application, to thereby enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the invention and various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated. It is intended that the scope of the invention be defined by the claims appended hereto and their equivalents.

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A pickup tailgate loading ramp for replacement of a standard pickup tailgate attached to the pickup by standard-equipment tailgate hardware, wherein said pickup tailgate loading ramp is adjustable between a vertical position when said pickup tailgate loading ramp is not being used for loading and a load position for moving materials and equipment from the road surface into the bed of the pickup truck, wherein the standard-equipment pickup tailgate hardware includes two latch pins and two hinge pins, said pickup tailgate loading ramp comprising:

a generally rectangular tailgate assembly having a first horizontal rail, an opposed second horizontal rail, and first and second end rails;

first and second hinge assemblies, wherein said first and second hinge assemblies are attached to said first horizontal rail and hingedly connect said first horizontal rail to said hinge pins;

first and second latch assemblies, wherein said first latch assembly is attached to said first end rail and said second latch assembly is attached to said second end rail, so that, when said pickup tailgate loading ramp is in the vertical position said first and second latch assemblies engage the standard-equipment latch pins and secure said pickup tailgate loading ramp to the pickup truck;

at least one folding ramp assembly, said folding ramp assembly further comprising:

an upper ramp section having an upper end and a lower end, said upper end of said upper ramp section being rigidly attached to said opposed horizontal rail of said tailgate section ;

a lower ramp section having an upper end and a lower end;

a U-shaped support member; and

a linkage member, said linkage member being characterized as having an upper portion, an intermediate portion, and a lower portion, said upper ramp section being pivotally attached to said upper portion of said linkage member, said support member being attached to said intermediate portion of said linkage member, and said lower ramp section being pivotally attached to said lower portion of said linkage member;

so that, as said tailgate assembly is rotated on said first and second hinge assemblies, said upper ramp section and said lower ramp section are extended outwardly and down from the pickup truck until said lower end of said lower ramp section is in contact with the road surface and a ramp is formed for moving materials from the road surface to the bed of the pickup truck.

ABSTRACT

A tailgate and loading ramp for pickup trucks includes a rectangular tailgate section rigidly attached to an upper ramp section. The lower end of the upper ramp section is pivotally attached to a linkage member. A support member and a lower ramp section are also attached to the linkage member to form a strong but lightweight ramp from the road surface to the bed of the pickup truck.

FIG. 1

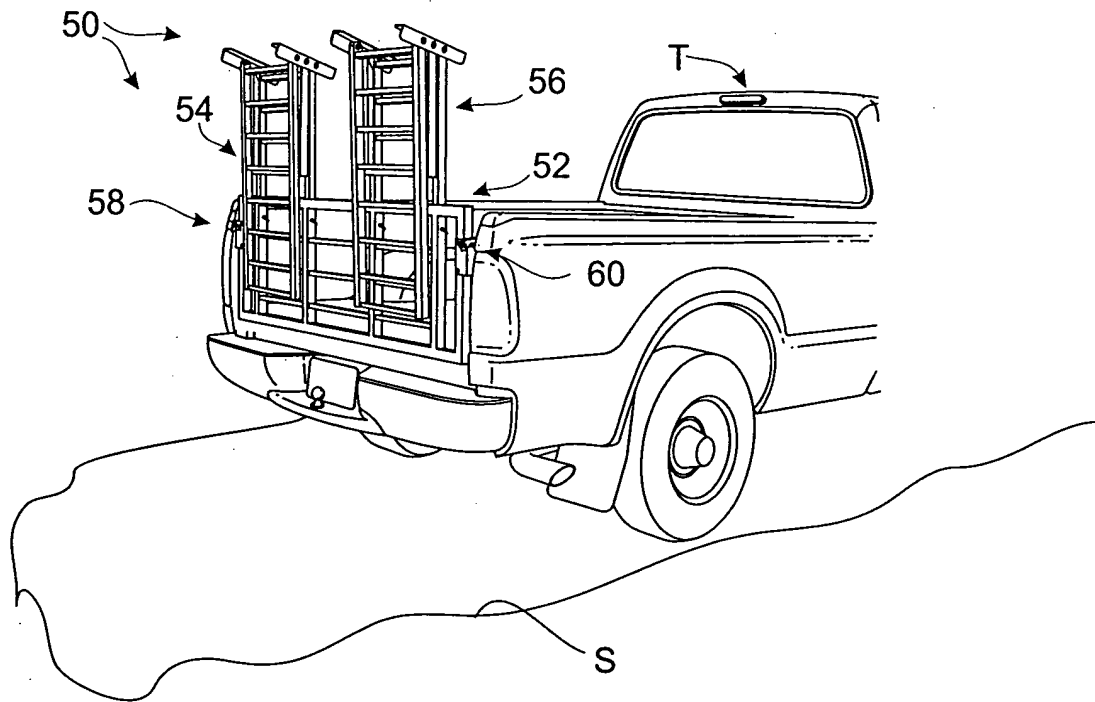


FIG. 2

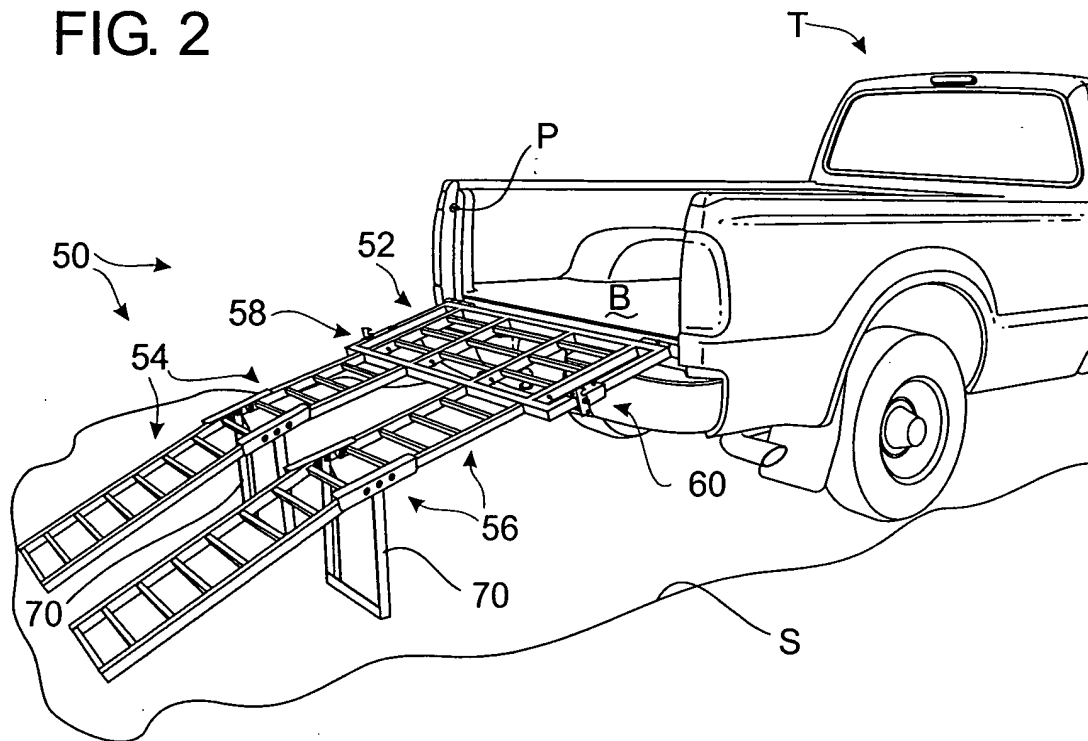


FIG. 3

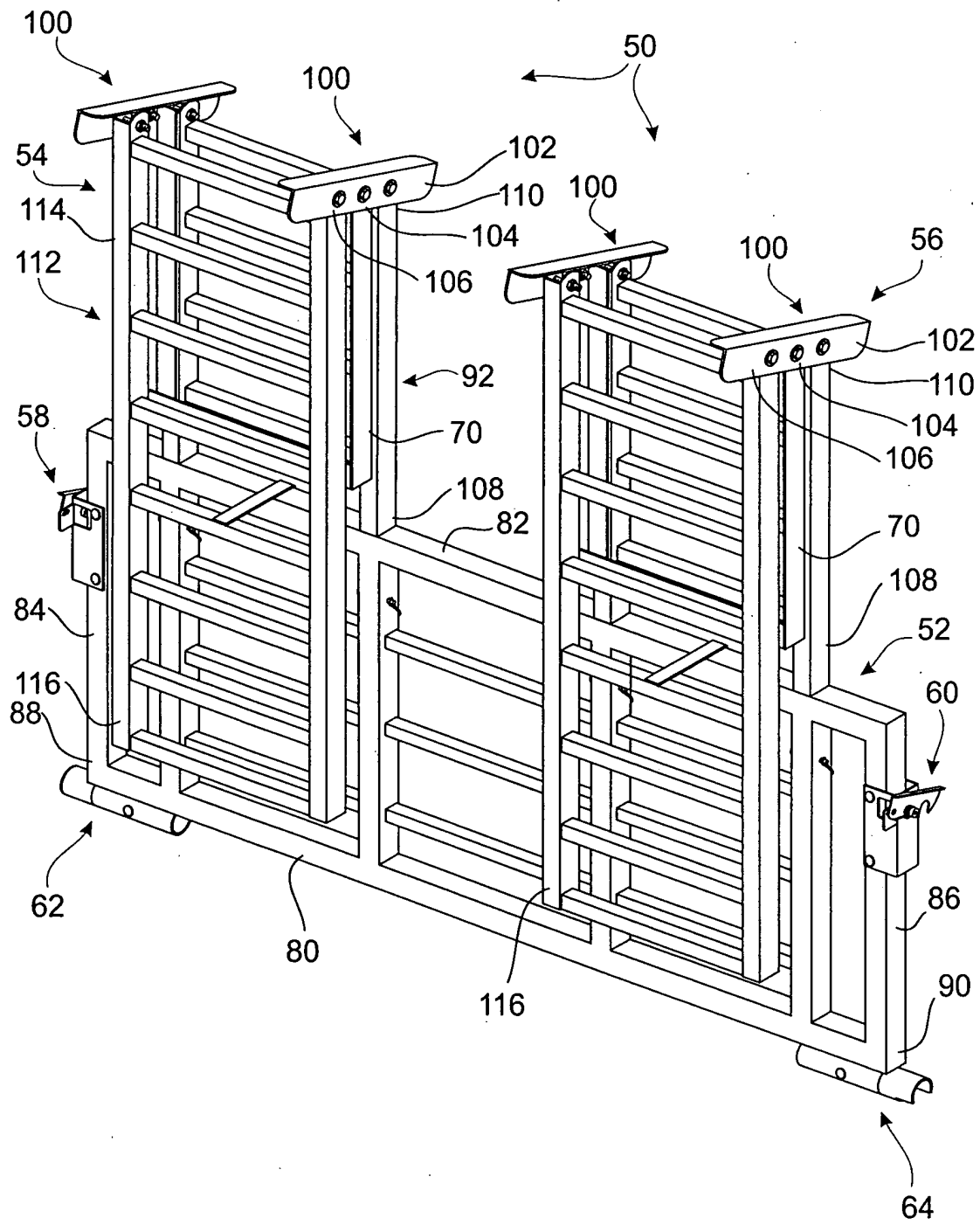


FIG. 4

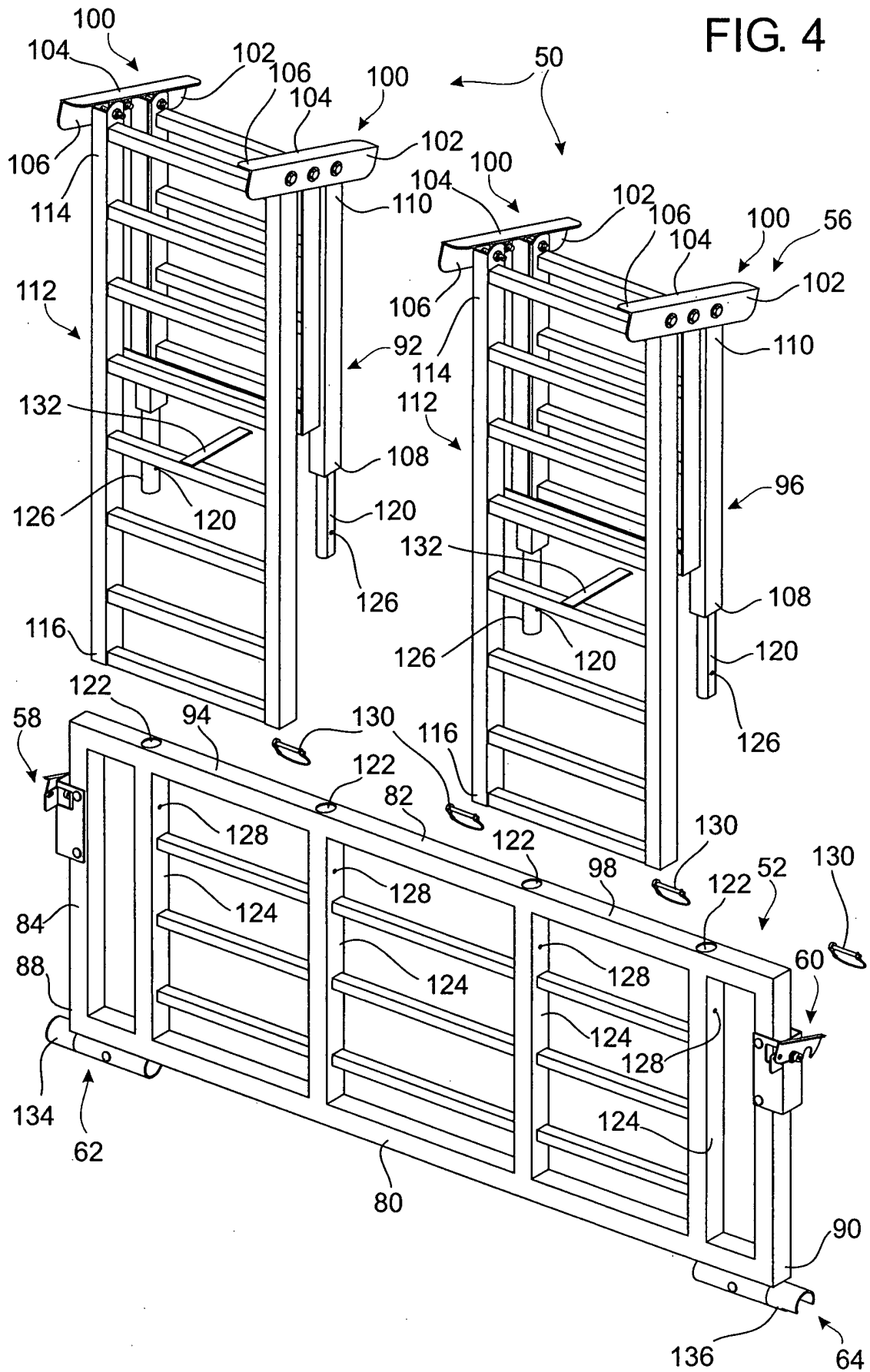


FIG. 8

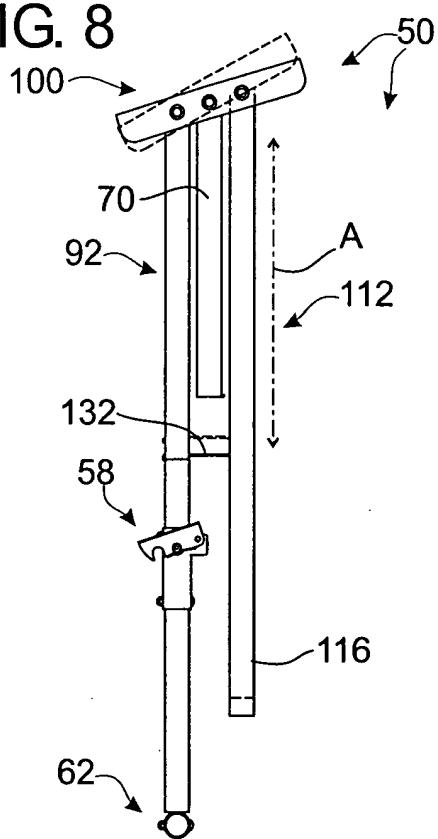


FIG. 9

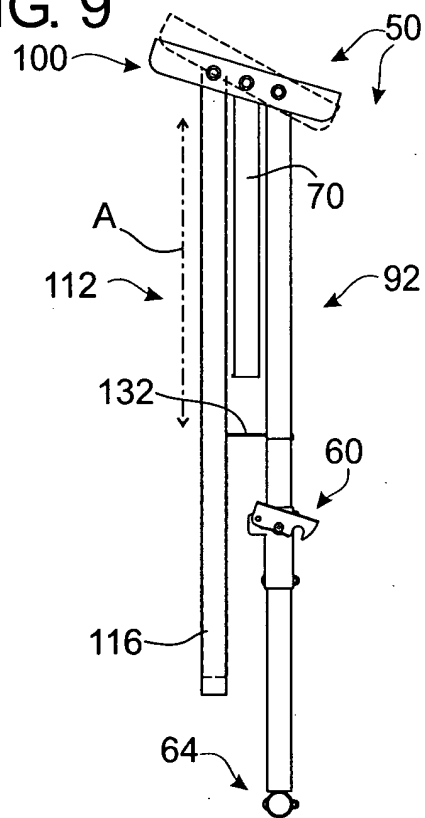


FIG. 10

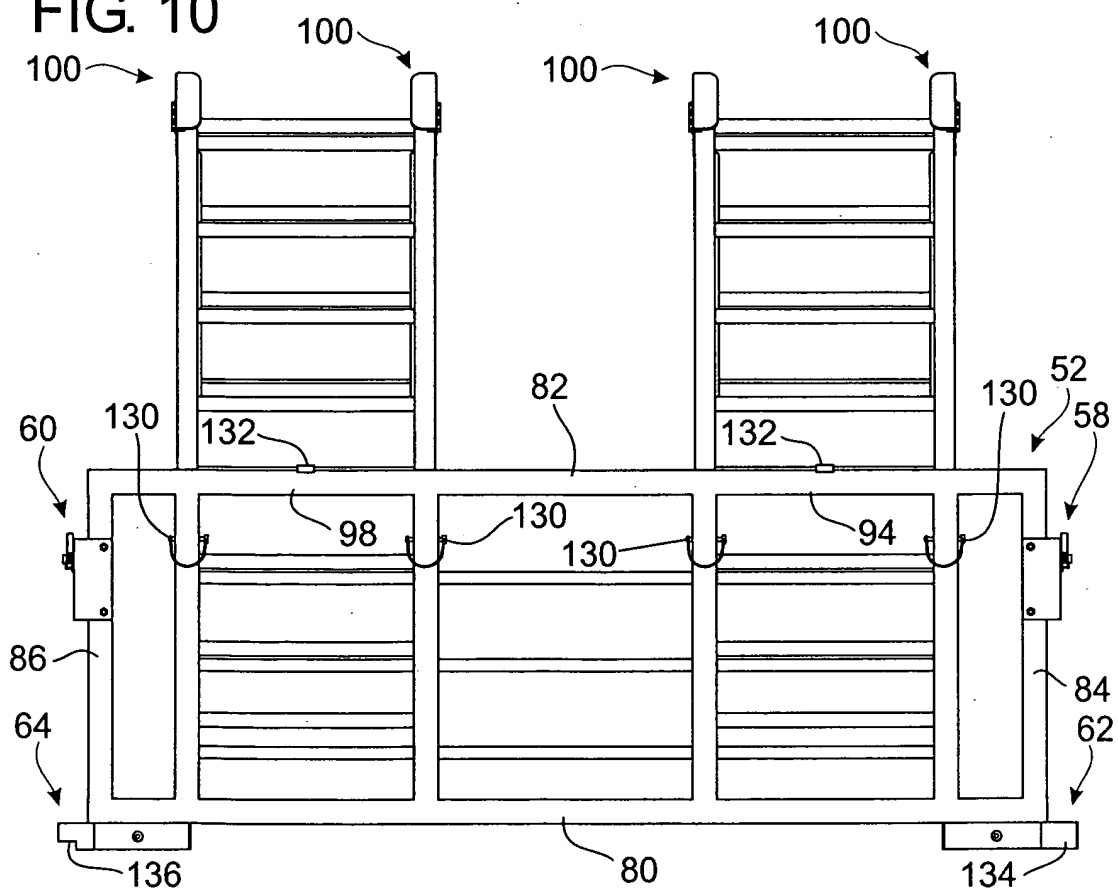


FIG. 11

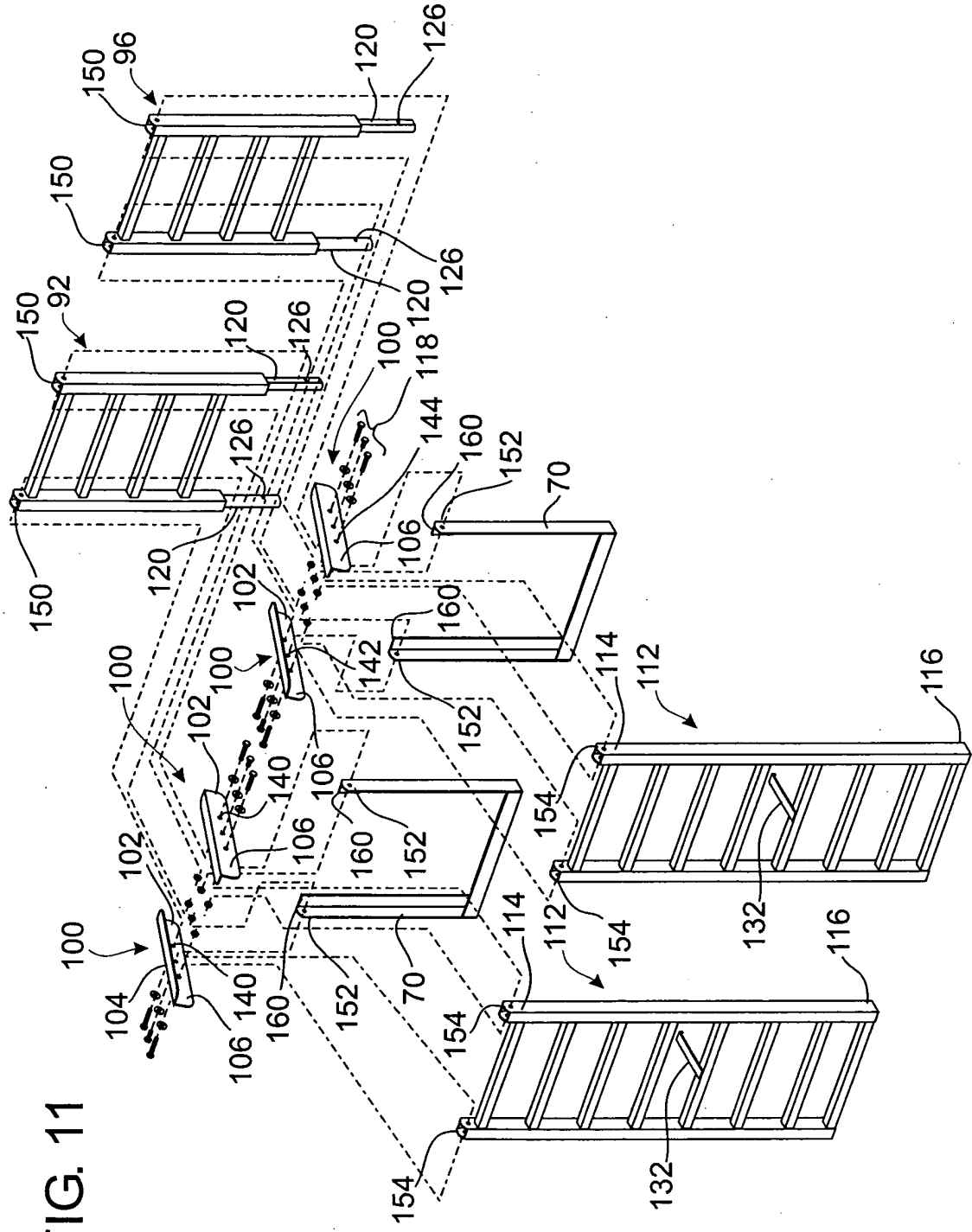


FIG. 12

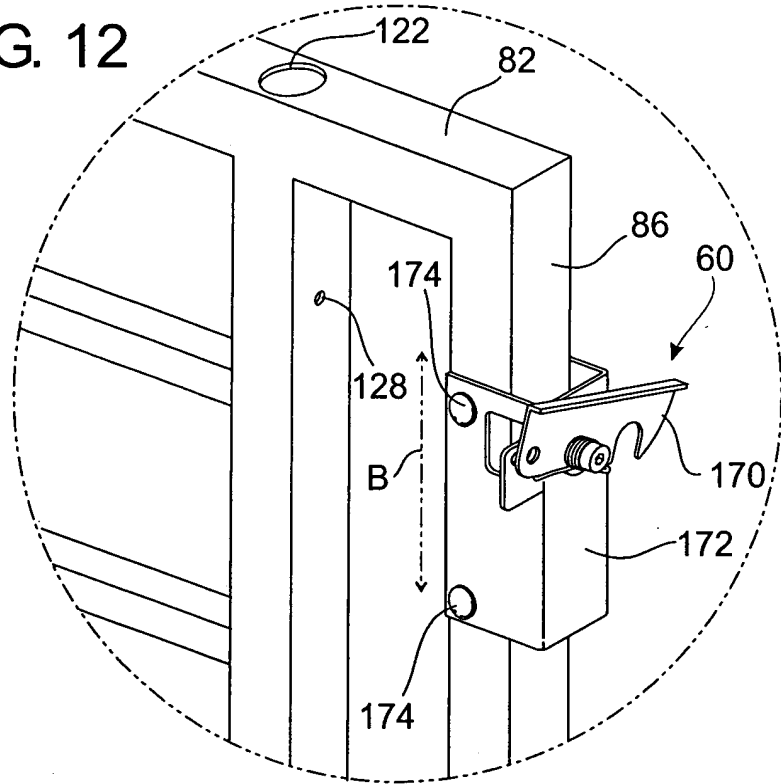


FIG. 13

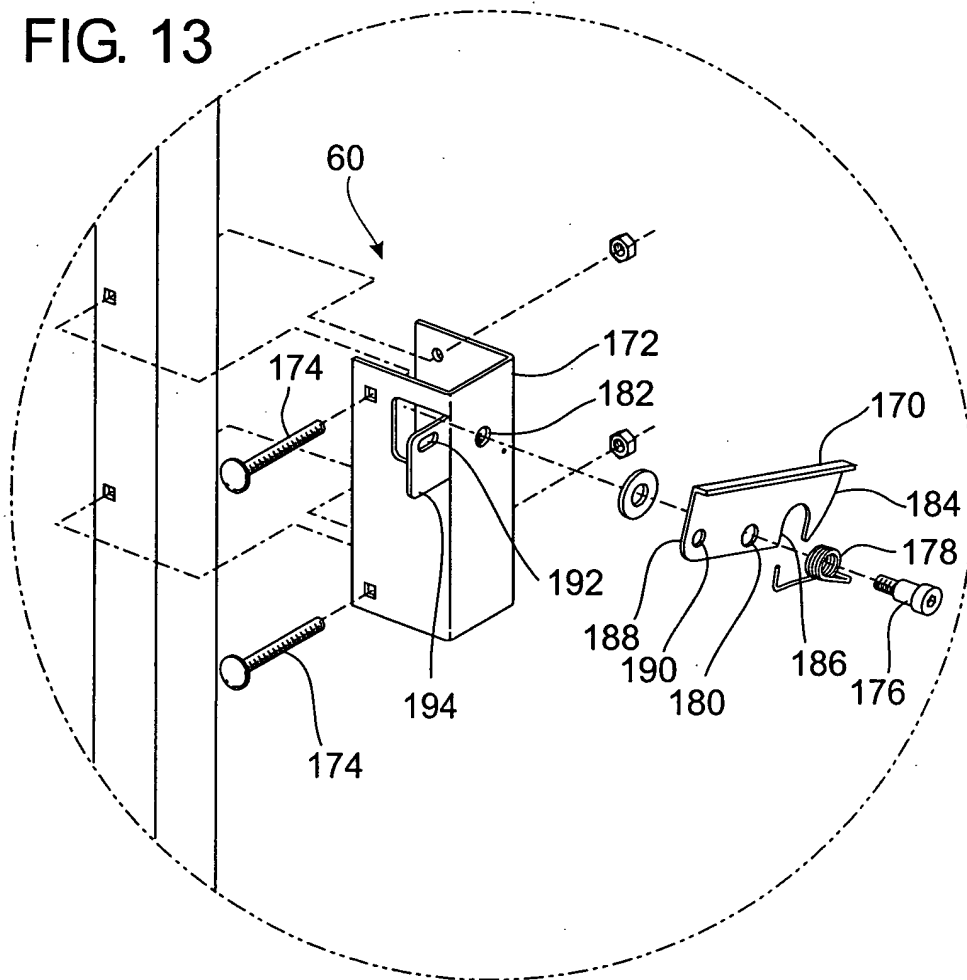


FIG. 14

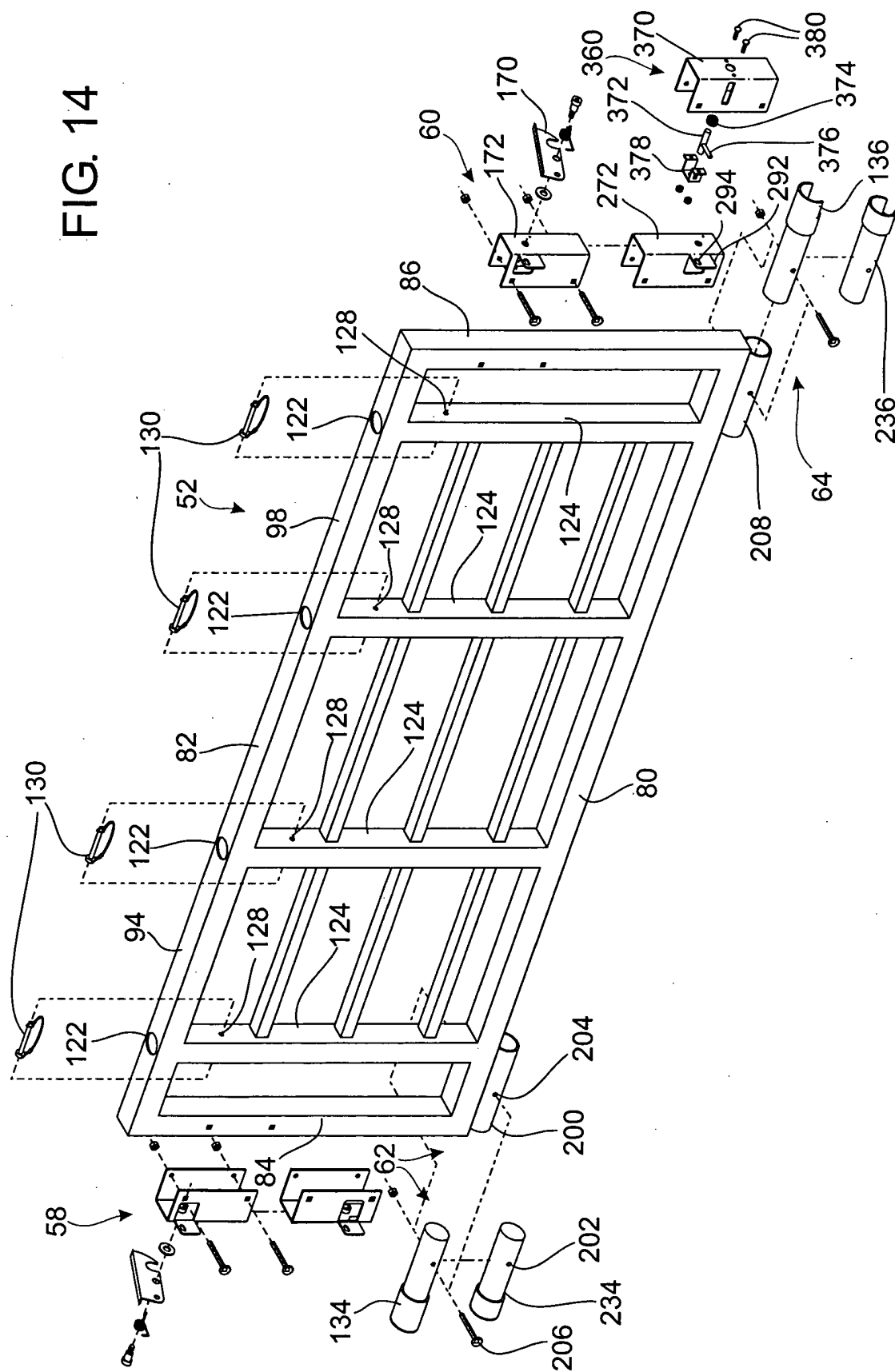


FIG. 15

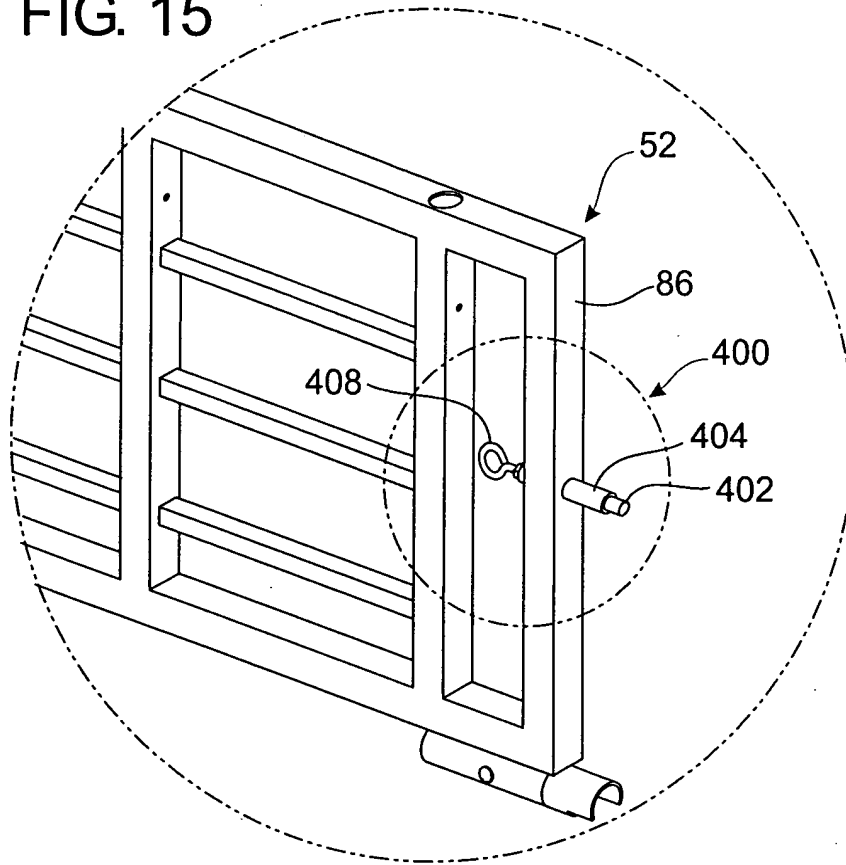
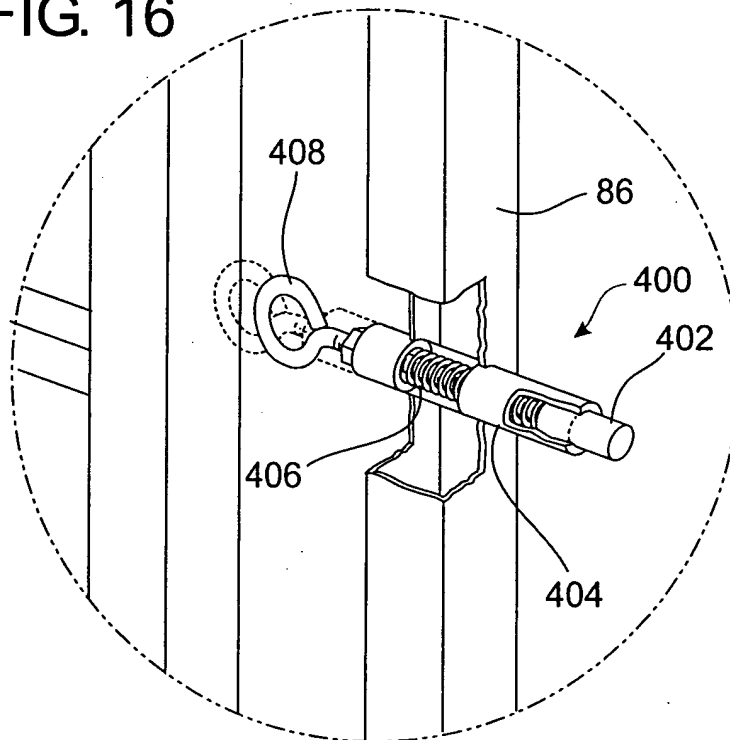
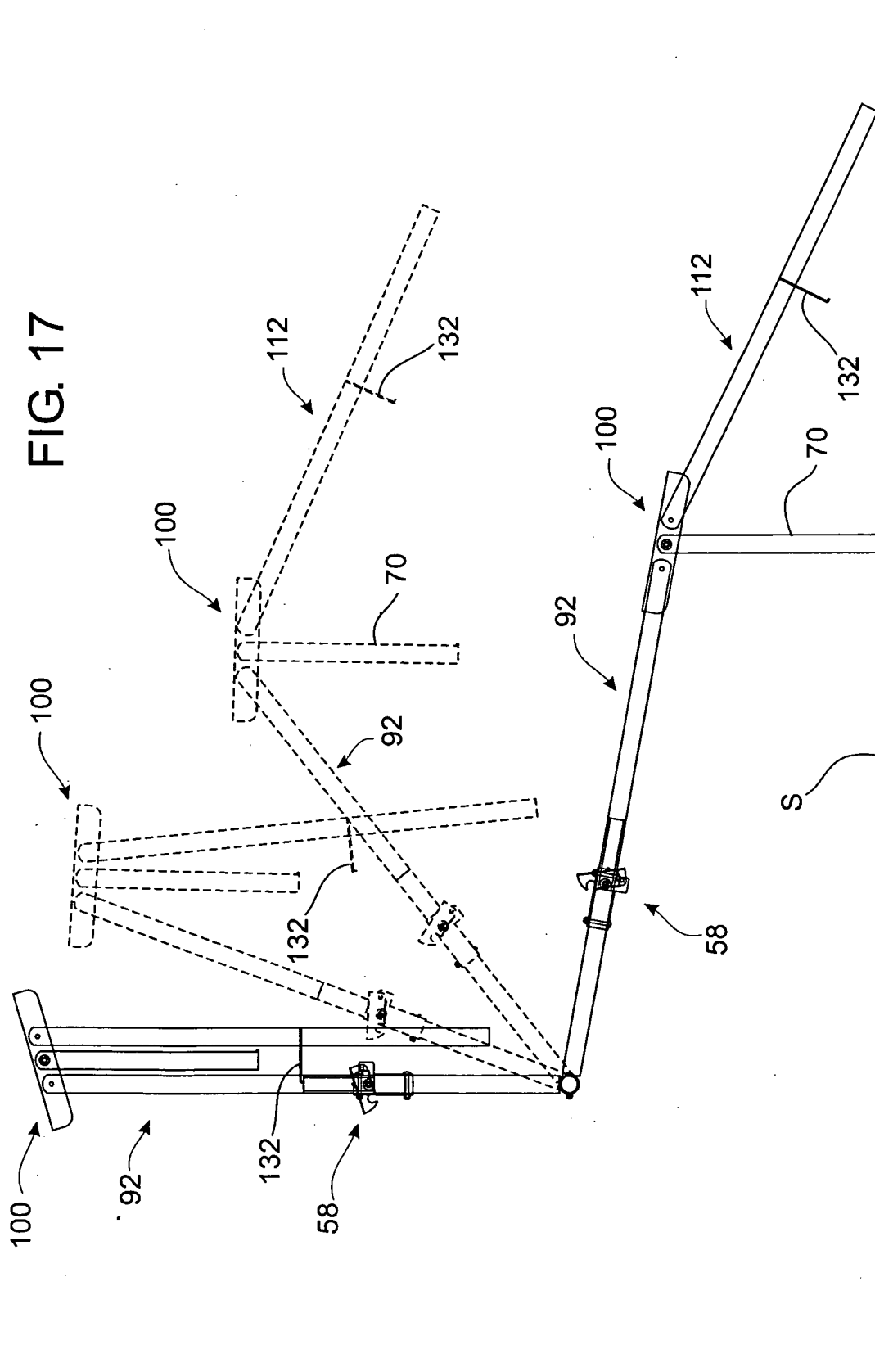


FIG. 16





PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No. **HUG107**

Anticipated Classification of this Application:

Class: ____ Subclass: ____

S/N: **Unknown**

Prior Application: **09/750, 498**

Examiner: **Fox, C.**

Art Unit: **3652**

Box PATENT APPLICATION
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

TYPE OF DECLARATION

This declaration is for a **continuation-in-part** application filed February 17, 2004.

INVENTORSHIP, TITLE AND SPECIFICATION IDENTIFICATION

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name. I believe I am the original, first, and sole inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP

the specification of which was filed December 29, 2000 as Serial No. **09/750,498** and amended by **PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT** filed herewith. A substitute specification, including new claims, is entered by **PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT** filed herewith.

GEORGE M. HUGGINS, INVENTOR
CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION FILING
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. HUG107
EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO. EL-886-358-148-US

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
COMBINED DECLARATION & POWER OF ATTORNEY
PAGE 1 OF 3

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEW OF PAPERS AND DUTY OF CANDOR

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56. In compliance with this duty, there is attached a copy of the information disclosure document originally filed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98.

PRIORITY CLAIMS

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of the following pending United States application:

Application Serial No.:	09/750,498
Date Filed:	December 29, 2000
Title as originally filed:	Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp
Title as last amended:	Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp

Insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in that prior application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information that is material to the examination of this application, namely, information where there is substantial likelihood that a reasonable Examiner would consider it important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

No foreign applications or PCT international applications have been filed and no foreign priority benefits are claimed.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

James T. Robinson
Registration No. 33,548

Send correspondence to:

James T. Robinson
222 East Main Street
Norman, OK 73069-1303

Direct telephone calls to:

James T. Robinson
(405) 292-1911

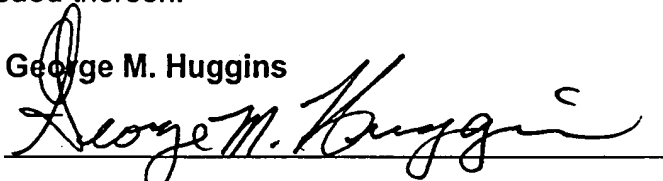
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of inventor:

George M. Huggins

Inventor's signature:



Date:

2-17-04

Country of Citizenship:

United States of America

Residence:

1678 County Street 2982
Blanchard, OK 73010

Post Office Address:

1678 County Street 2982
Blanchard, OK 73010

THE DECLARATION ENDS WITH THIS PAGE.

Please type a plus sign (+) inside this box → ☐

PTO/SB/01 (12-97)
Approved for use through 8/30/00. OMB 0851-0032
Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63)	Attorney Docket Number	3527
	First Named Inventor	George M. Huggins
	COMPLETE IF KNOWN	
	Application Number	/
	Filing Date	
	Group Art Unit	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing (surcharge (37 CFR 1.18 (e)) required)
	Examiner Name	

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP

the specification of which
☒ is attached hereto
OR
☐ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY) as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY) (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 368(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
				YES	NO
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

Please type a plus sign (+) inside this box ☒

PTO/SB/01 (12-97)
Approved for use through 8/30/00, OMB 0651-0032
Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

DECLARATION — Utility or Design Patent Application

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application.

U.S. Parent Application or PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (if applicable)

☐ Additional U.S. or PCT International application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith: ☒ Customer Number 001240 OR ☐ Registered practitioner(s) name/registration number listed below

Place Customer
Number Bar Code
Label here

Name	Registration Number	Name	Registration Number
Robert K. Rhea	20,045		

☐ Additional registered practitioner(s) named on supplemental Registered Practitioner Information sheet PTO/SB/02C attached hereto.

Direct all correspondence to: ☒ Customer Number 001240 OR ☒ Correspondence address below

Name	Robert K. Rhea				
Address	5350 S. Western, Ste. 305				
Address					
City	Oklahoma City	State	OK	ZIP	73109
Country	USA	Telephone	405-634-1915	Fax	405-634-1981

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Name of Sole or First Inventor:	<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor				
Given Name (first and middle if any)			Family Name or Surname		
George M.			Huggins		
Inventor's Signature	<i>George M. Huggins</i>			Date	12-19-00
Residence: City	Blanchard	State	OK	Country	USA
Post Office Address	Rt. #1, Box 48				
Post Office Address					
City	Blanchard	State	OK	ZIP	73010
				Country	USA

☐ Additional inventors are being named on the _____ supplemental Additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto

Form PTO-1449
REV. 7-90

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTY. DOCKET NO.

3527

SERIAL NO.

LIST OF PRIOR ART CITED BY APPLICANT
(Use several sheets if necessary)

APPLICANT

George M. Huggins

FILING DATE

GROUP

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAMINER INITIAL		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
	AA			None Applicable			
	AB						
	AC						
	AD						
	AE						
	AF						
	AG						
	AH						
	AI						
	AJ						
	AK						

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	TRANSLATION	
							YES	NO
	AL							
	AM							
	AN							
	AO							
	AP							

OTHER PRIOR ART (including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)

	AR		
	AS		
	AT		

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

December 20, 2000

PRIOR ART STATEMENT
IN THE ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

#3527

Dear Sir:

Neither the inventor or the undersigned have knowledge of
pertinent prior patents.

Respectfully submitted,
George M. Huggins

By:

Robert K. Rhea

Robert K. Rhea, Patent Agent
Phone: 405-634-1915

RKR/bkf

<h2 style="margin: 0;">FEE TRANSMITTAL</h2> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 5px 0;">Patent fees are subject to annual revision on October 1. These are the fees effective October 1, 1997.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">Small Entity payments must be supported by a small entity statement, otherwise large entity fees must be paid. See Forms PTO/SW-0-12. See 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.27 and 1.28.</p>		<h3 style="margin: 0;">Complete if Known</h3>	
Application Number			
Filing Date			
First Named Inventor		George M. Huggins	
Examiner Name			
Group / Art Unit			
Attorney Docket No.		3527	
TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT		(\$) 355.00	

<h3 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">METHOD OF PAYMENT (check one)</h3> <p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Correspondent is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any over payments by:</p> <p>Deposit Account Number: <u>18-1156</u></p> <p>Deposit Account Name: <u>Robert K. Rhea</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Charge Any Additional Fee Requested Under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 <input type="checkbox"/> Charge the same Fee Set by 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 at the Meeting of the Office of Allowance</p> <p>2. <input type="checkbox"/> Payment Enclosed: <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <h3 style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">FEE CALCULATION</h3> <h4 style="margin: 0;">1. BASIC FILING FEE</h4> <table style="width: 100%; font-size: x-small;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Large Entity Fee Code (1)</th> <th>Small Entity Fee Code (2)</th> <th>Fee Description</th> <th>Fee Paid</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>101</td> <td>201</td> <td>Basic Filing Fee</td> <td>355.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102</td> <td>202</td> <td>Design Filing Fee</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>103</td> <td>203</td> <td>Plant Filing Fee</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>104</td> <td>204</td> <td>Reissue Filing Fee</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>105</td> <td>205</td> <td>Provisional Filing Fee</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">SUBTOTAL (1)</td> <td>(\$) 355.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <h4 style="margin: 10px 0;">2. 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SUBMITTED BY				Complete if applicable	
Typed or Printed Name	Robert K. Rhea			Reg. Number	20,045
Signature	Robert K. Rhea	Date	12-20-97	Deposit Account	USO 10

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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL <small>(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. § 1.63(b))</small>	Attorney Docket No.	3527
	First Inventor or Application Identifier	George M. Huggins
	Title	PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
	Express Mail Label No.	

APPLICATION ELEMENTS <small>See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.</small>	ADDRESS TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents Box Patent Application Washington, DC 20231
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> * Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17) <small>(Submit an original and a duplicate for fee processing)</small>	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)
2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specification <small>[Total Pages 11]</small> <small>(preferred arrangement set forth below)</small> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Descriptive title of the invention- Cross References to Related Applications- Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D- Reference to Microfiche Appendix- Background of the invention- Brief Summary of the invention- Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)- Detailed Description- Claim(s)- Abstract of the Disclosure	7. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission <small>(If applicable, all necessary)</small> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Readable Copyb. <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Copy (identical to computer copy)c. <input type="checkbox"/> Statement verifying identity of above copies
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) (35 U.S.C. 113) <small>[Total Sheets 3]</small>	ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS
4. Oath or Declaration <small>[Total Pages 2]</small> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newly executed (original or copy)b. <input type="checkbox"/> Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. § 1.63(d)) <small>(for continuation/divisional with Box 17 completed)</small> <small>[Note Box 3 below]</small>c. <input type="checkbox"/> DELETION OF INVENTOR(S) <small>Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).</small>	8. <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporation By Reference (useable if Box 4b is checked) <small>The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered to be part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.</small>	9. <input type="checkbox"/> 37 C.F.R. § 3.73(b) Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney <small>(when there is an assignee)</small>
17. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box, and supply the requisite information below and in a preliminary amendment: <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Divisional <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No. _____ <small>Prior application information: Examiner _____ Group / Art Unit: _____</small>	10. <input type="checkbox"/> English Translation Document (if applicable)
	11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement (IDS/PTO-1449) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Copies of IDS Citations
	12. <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Amendment
	13. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503) <small>(Should be specifically itemized)</small>
	14. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Entity Statement(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Statement filed in prior application, Status still proper and desired <small>(PTO/SB/09-12)</small>
	15. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) <small>(if foreign priority is claimed)</small>
	16. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

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18. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer Number or Bar Code Label 001240 or <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence address below <small>(Insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)</small>					
Name	Robert K. Rhea				
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City	Oklahoma City	State	OK	Zip Code	73109
Country	USA	Telephone	405-634-1915	Fax	405-634-1981

Name (Print/Type)	Robert K. Rhea	Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	20,045
Signature	<i>Robert K. Rhea</i>	Date	12-20-2000

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PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED
RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable.

1 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

2 This present invention relates to loading ramps and more
3 particularly combination pickup truck tailgate and loading
4 ramp.

5 1. Field of the Invention

6 2. Description of the Prior Art

7 When loading articles of considerable mass into a pickup
8 bed it has been common practice to lower the pickup tailgate
9 and provide a temporary ramp, particularly if the article to
10 be loaded is equipped with wheels such as riding lawn mowers
11 or golf carts, in which the temporary ramp consists of lengths
12 of lumber, such as 2 by 8 or 2 by 12, extending from the
13 rearward edge of the pickup tailgate to the surface of the
14 earth. Additionally, ramp ends or ramp feet which are at-
15 tached to the respective ends of such temporary lumber ramps
16 are commercially available to form a smooth transition from
17 the surface of the earth and the upper end portion of the
18 temporary ramp and the horizontal surface of the tailgate.

19 This invention is distinctive over such ramps for pickup
20 trucks by providing one end of the ramp of this invention to

1 serve as a pickup tailgate and including pairs of rigidly
2 connected track forming frames extending from the tailgate
3 position to the surface of the earth in which these frames are
4 hinged intermediate their ends and provided with a gravity
5 positioned support.

6 BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

7 A rectangular frame having overall dimensions substan-
8 tially equal with the perimeter dimensions of the standard
9 tailgate for the pickup truck to be equipped with a loading
10 ramp is provided with hinge and latch mounting members secur-
11 ing the rectangular main frame to the pickup bed for vertical
12 movement about a horizontal axis in opening and closing the
13 tailgate portion. Additionally two pairs of elongated rectan-
14 gular frames cooperatively hinged together are rigidly con-
15 nected at one end in laterally spaced relation to the top edge
16 surface forming the rectangular main frame with the other ends
17 of the pairs of hinged frames resting on the surface of the
18 earth and supported at their hinged position by a gravity
19 positioned U-shaped frame pivotally depending from the hinge
20 position of the track forming frames. Each of the main frame
21 and hinged rectangular frames are transversely provided with a
22 plurality of equally spaced apart right angle cross members
23 forming an open frame work for supporting the wheels of vehi-
24 cles being moved up or down the ramp from the surface of the
25 earth to the bed of the pickup or vice versa. When not in use
26 as a ramp the main frame forms the tailgate of a pickup bed

1 and the remaining portion of the ramp is disposed upright
2 adjacent the vertical plane of the tailgate for ease in lower-
3 ing the ramp to a loading or unloading position by simply
4 lowering the tailgate and extending the hinged frames
5 rearwardly to the surface of the earth.

6 The principal object of this invention is to provide a
7 pickup loading ramp having a tailgate portion, which remains
8 connected with the pickup at all times and is easily moved
9 from a pickup bed closed position to a pickup bed ramp loading
10 or unloading position for wheel equipped vehicles.

11 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

12 Figure 1 is a perspective view of the loading ramp in
13 operative position on a pickup truck, the truck chassis being
14 omitted for clarity;

15 Figure 2 is a rearward elevational view of the loading
16 ramp when folded to pickup tailgate closed position, of the
17 pickup cab omitted for clarity;

18 Figure 3 is a top plan view of the loading ramp, per se;

19 Figure 4 is a fragmentary vertical cross sectional view,
20 to a different scale, taken substantially along the line 4---4
21 of Fig. 3;

22 Figure 5 is a perspective view of the loading ramp in
23 operative position when viewed from one side;

24 Figure 6 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the
25 loading ramp when folded to tailgate closed position;

26 Figure 7 is a top plan view of a modified ramp for load-

1 ing and unloading three wheel vehicles;

2 Figure 8 is a top plan view of loading ramp track sec-
3 tions forming the alternative embodiment of Fig. 7; and,

4 Figure 9 is an elevational view of the hinged track
5 support.

6 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

7 Referring first to Figs. 1 and 3, the reference numeral
8 10 indicates a generally rectangular frame in overall configu-
9 ration lying in a common plane, forming a ramp, pivotally
10 connected at one end with the tailgate position of a conven-
11 tional pickup truck 12.

12 The ramp 10 includes a rectangular tailgate portion 14
13 having overall dimensions substantially equal with the overall
14 dimensions of a tailgate of the pickup truck 10. The tailgate
15 section 14 comprises a base rail 16 connected, in parallel
16 relation, with a top rail 18 both formed from tubing material
17 and interconnected by a pair of tubular end rails 20 and 22.
18 A pair of hinge members 24 cooperating with the tailgate
19 hinges, not shown, project outwardly from respective end
20 portions of the base rail 16 at its juncture with the end
21 rails 20 and 22, respectively. Respective end portions of the
22 top rail support a pair of latches 26 for securing the tail-
23 gate 14 in closed position.

24 The ramp 10 further includes a pair of elongated ramp
25 tracks 28 and 30 rigidly connected at one end in laterally
26 spaced relation with the top rail 18 of the gate section 14.

1 Since the ramp forming tracks 28 and 30 are identical, only
2 the track 28 is described, in detail in the interest of brev-
3 ity.

4 The track 28 comprises a pair of U-shaped frame members
5 32 and 34 having leg end portions 35-36 and 38-39 respectively
6 disposed in confronting relation and pivotally connected with
7 one flange of a pair of right angle hinge forming members 42
8 and 43 for vertical pivoting movement of the U-shape member 34
9 toward and away from the underside of the other U-shaped
10 member 32, as viewed in Fig. 3. The bight portion 44 of the
11 U-shaped member 32 is rigidly secured longitudinally to one
12 end portion of the tailgate top rail 18 in spaced relation
13 with respect to the other track 30. The bight portion 46 of
14 the U-shaped member 34 is normally supported by the surface of
15 the earth 47 (Fig. 5).

16 A track support member 50 (Fig. 9) comprising a U-shaped
17 member having a tubular bight portion 51 and upstanding angu-
18 lar metal legs 52 and 54 pivotally connected with the hinge
19 forming members 42 and 43 between the confronting ends of the
20 legs of the U-shaped members 32 and 34. The track support 50
21 is normally vertically disposed, by gravity, and contacts the
22 surface of the earth 47 below the respective track 28 and 30
23 when the loading ramp 10 is disposed in loading position (Fig.
24 5).

25 The track 28 further includes a plurality of transverse
26 cross members 56 extending between the legs of the U-shaped

1 members 32 and 34 in longitudinal equally spaced relation.
2 Each of the cross members 56 comprise a length of rigid right
3 angle metal disposed with the edges of the angular flanges
4 directed upwardly as viewed in Fig. 4 for increased frictional
5 resistance against the wheels of vehicles moving up or down
6 the plane of the ramp during the loading or unloading move-
7 ment. Similarly, the tailgate section 14 is provided with a
8 plurality of longitudinally cross members 58 extending between
9 the end rails 20 and 22 and are identical in transverse cross
10 section with the track cross members 56. A plurality of brace
11 members 59 extend between the tailgate bottom rail 16 and top
12 rail 18 for rigidity.

13 OPERATION

14 In operation of the embodiment 10, assuming the factory
15 equipped tailgate of the truck 12 has been removed, the tail-
16 gate section hinge members 24 are cooperatively received by
17 the hinge members of the tailgate, not shown, on the pickup
18 truck bed. The latches 26 secure the tailgate section 14 when
19 in closed position to the pickup bed side walls. When not in
20 use the ramp track members 28 and 30 are disposed in the
21 position illustrated by Fig. 6 with the U-shaped members 34
22 depending from the hinge members 42 and 43 and the track
23 support members 50 interposed between the U-shaped frames 32
24 and 34.

25 When it is desired to utilize the track for loading and
26 unloading a wheeled vehicle, not shown, the tailgate latches

1 26 are released and the ramp 10 is pivoted downwardly and
2 rearwardly about the horizontal axis of the tailgate hinge
3 members 24 until the bight portion 46 of the U-shaped member
4 34 rests on the surface of the earth 47 and gravity disposes
5 the track support 50 in a vertical position (Fig. 5). There-
6 after a wheeled vehicle, not shown, under its own power may be
7 driven up or down the plane formed by the loading ramp 10.

8 An alternative embodiment 10' is illustrated by Fig. 7
9 in the event it is desired to load a three wheel vehicle into
10 the pickup bed. A temporary track 28' (Fig. 8) is interposed
11 between the tracks 28 and 30 to supply a track for the single
12 front or rear wheel of a three wheel vehicle in negotiating
13 the ramp 10'. The temporary track 28' similarly comprises a
14 U-shaped frame member 32' and a companion U-shaped frame
15 member 34', each having their respective legs disposed in
16 confronting relation. The bight portion 44' of the U-shaped
17 member 32' is interposed between the tracks 28 and 30 adjacent
18 the tailgate top rail 18. The U-shaped member 32' is main-
19 tained in interposed relation between the tracks 28 and 30 by
20 pairs of flanges 60 and 62 secured in transverse opposition to
21 the legs of the U-shaped member 32' and overlap the adjacent
22 legs of the members 28 and 30. Similarly the other U-shaped
23 member 34' is provided with pairs of rigidly connected flanges
24 64 and 66 similarly overlapping the legs of the adjacent
25 tracks 28 and 30 to complete the configuration of the alterna-
26 tive embodiment 10'.

1 Obviously the invention is susceptible to changes or
2 alterations without defeating its practicability. Therefore,
3 I do not wish to be confined to the preferred embodiment(s)
4 shown in the drawing(s) and described herein.

5 I claim:

CLAIMS

1 1. A pickup truck tailgate and loading ramp, comprising:
2 main frame means including a base rail and a top rail
3 for occupying the position and function of a pickup
4 tailgate; and,

5 elongated frame means connected at one end with said main
6 frame means top rail for forming a loading ramp track
7 when in tailgate lowered position.

1 2. The truck tailgate and loading ramp according to claim
2 1 in which said frame means comprises:

3 two pairs of longitudinally hingedly interconnected
4 frames rigidly connected in laterally spaced relation
5 with said main frame top rail; and,

6 a ramp track support hingedly depending from the hinged
7 position of said pairs of frames.

1 3. The truck tailgate and loading ramp according to claim
2 2 and further including:

3 a plurality of cross members extending transversely of
4 said main frame and said one frame in longitudinal spaced-
5 apart relation.

1 4. The truck tailgate and loading ramp according to claim
2 1 in which said frame means comprises:

3 at least one pair of longitudinally hingedly intercon-
4 nected frames; and,

5 a ramp track support hingedly depending from the hinged
6 position of said one pair of frames.

1 5. The truck tailgate and loading ramp according to claim
2 4 and further including:

3 a plurality of cross members extending transversely of said
4 main frame and said one frame in longitudinal spaced-
5 apart relation.

1 6. A pickup truck tailgate and loading ramp, comprising:
2 main frame means including end rails connected with a base
3 rail and a top rail for occupying the position and func-
4 tion of a pickup tailgate;

5 pairs of elongated U-shaped frame means having hingedly con-
6 nected legs and rigidly connected at one end in laterally
7 spaced relation with said main frame means top rail for
8 forming loading ramp tracks when in tailgate lowered
9 position; and,

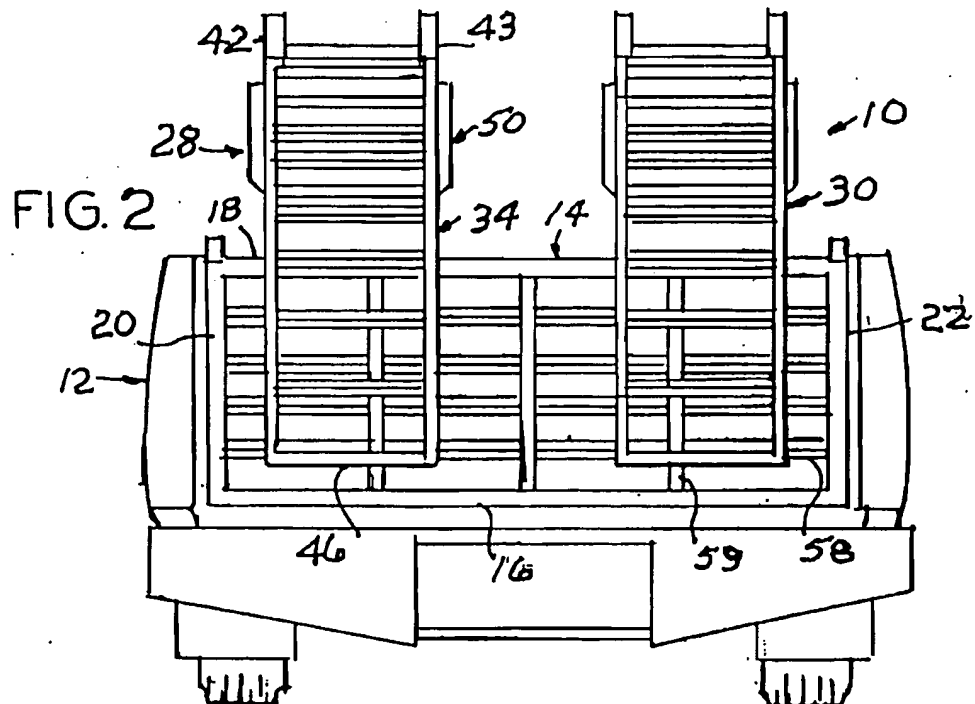
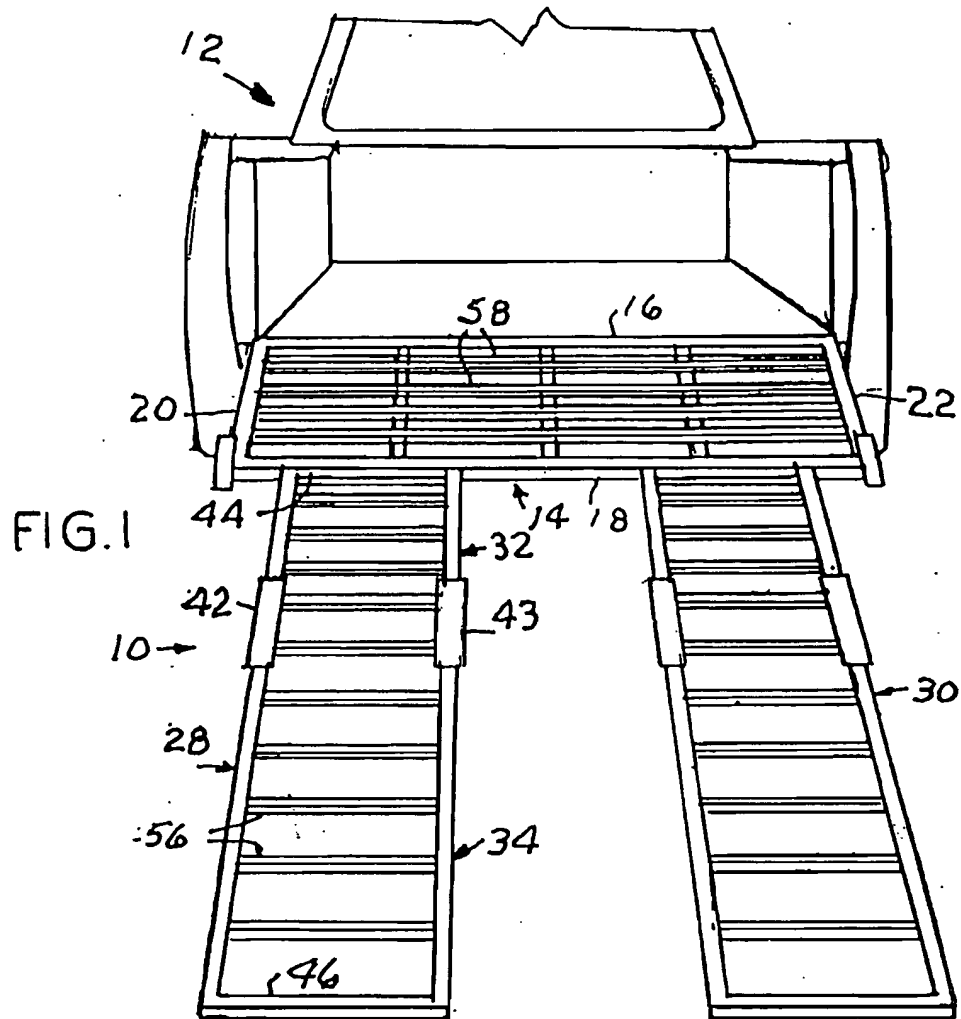
10 a ramp track support hingedly depending from the hinged
11 position of said pairs of frames.

1 7. The truck tailgate and loading ramp according to claim
2 6 and further including:

3 a plurality of cross members extending transversely of
4 said main frame and said pairs of frames in longitudinal
5 spaced-apart relation.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

1 A pickup truck tailgate and loading ramp is formed by a
2 main frame dimensioned to be hingedly received by a given
3 pickup bed. Two pairs of hingedly interconnected frames are
4 rigidly secured to the top rail of the tailgate section and
5 form a pair of ramp tracks when in tailgate lowered position.
6 When not in use the track forming frames are disposed rear-
7 wardly of the closed tailgate section.



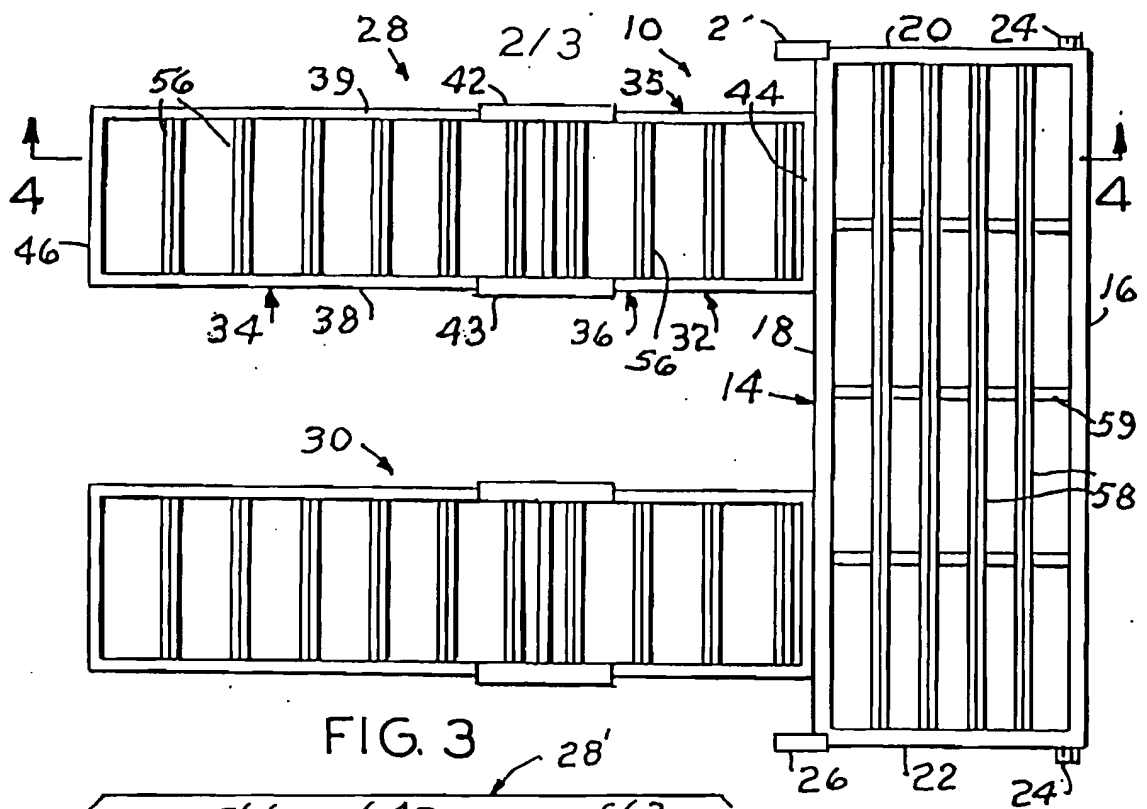


FIG. 3

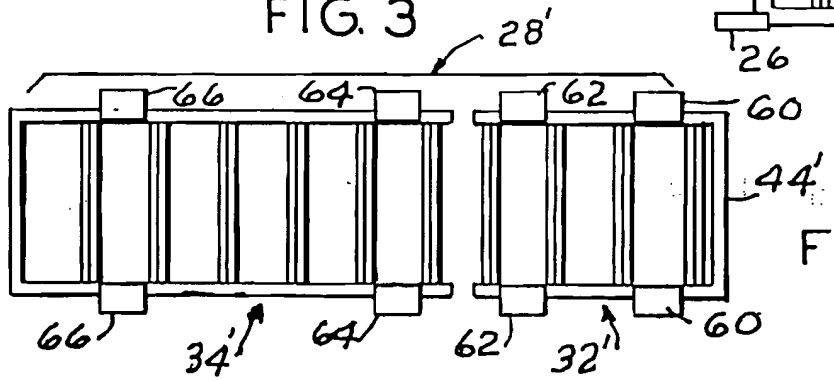


FIG. 8

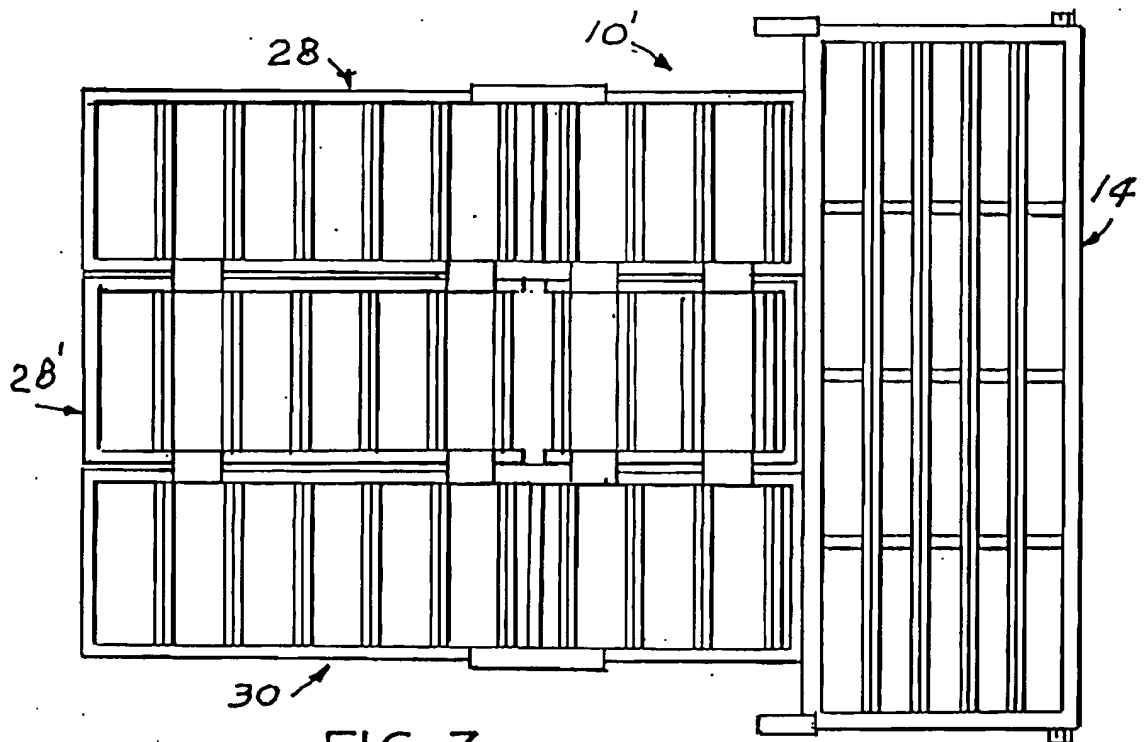
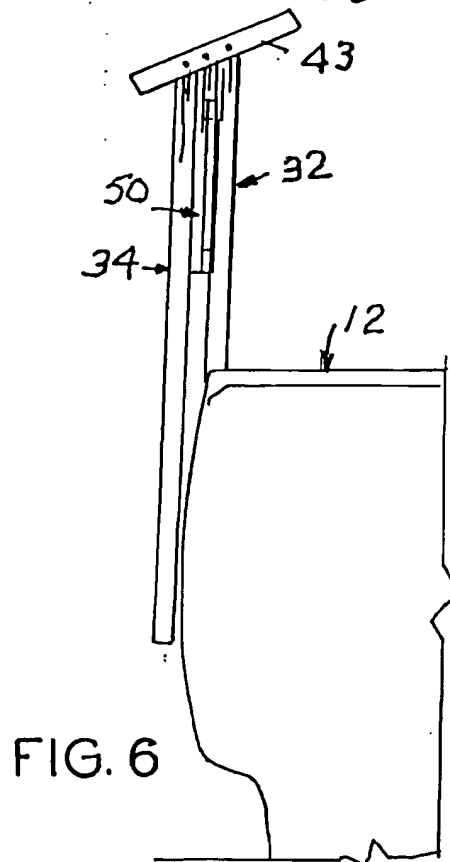
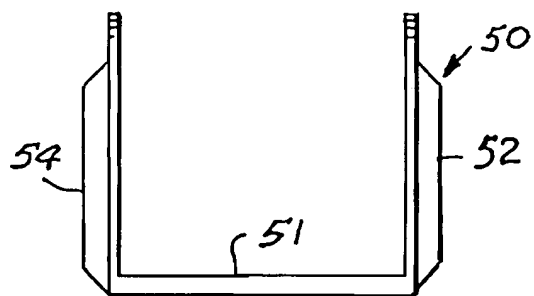
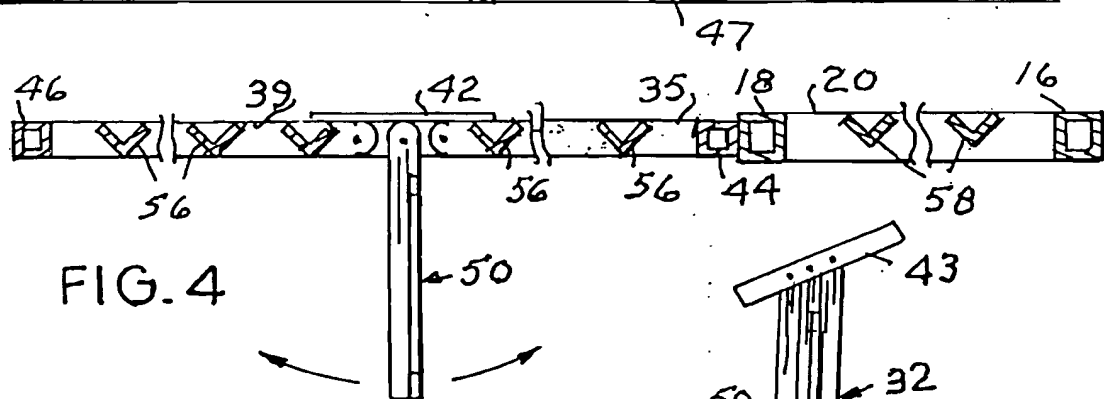
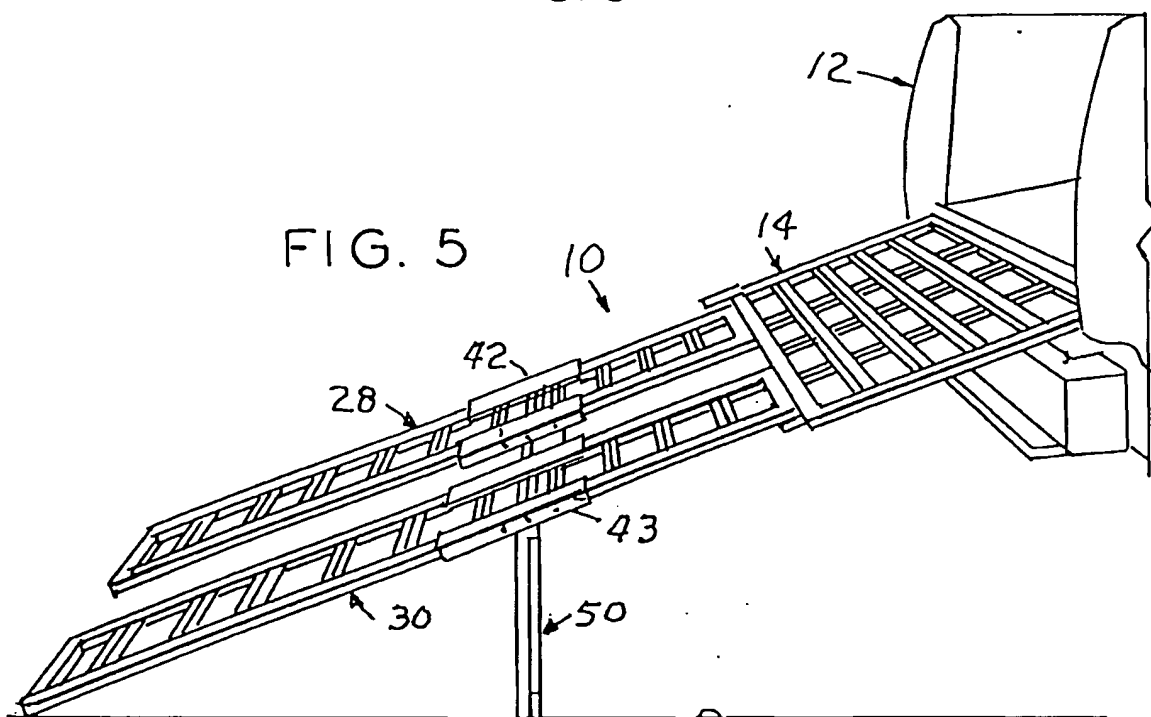


FIG. 7



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No. **HUG107**

Anticipated Classification of this Application:

Class: **XXX** Subclass: **XXXXXX**

S/N:

Prior Application: **09/750,498**

Examiner: **Fox, C.**

Art Unit: **3652**

Mail Stop PATENT APPLICATION
Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 223313-1450

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please amend the continuation-in-part application as follows:

IN THE DRAWINGS:

1. Cancel the old figures and add new Figures **1-17**, attached.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

2. Cancel the original specification and substitute the enclosed specification therefor **(in the present application only)**:

IN THE CLAIMS:

3. Cancel all claims in the previous application **(in the present application only)** and add new claim 1.
4. Add new claim 1 as set forth in the attached patent application.

GEORGE M. HUGGINS, INVENTOR
USPS EXPRESS MAIL LABEL No. EL-886-358-148-US
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET No. HUG107

PATENT
PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
PAGE 1 OF 2

IN THE ABSTRACT:

5. Cancel the original abstract and substitute the attached Abstract therefor.

REMARKS

By the present amendment, all claims in the parent application have been canceled. New claim 1 has been added. Only a single claim is present in the application, as amended. Applicant respectfully requests that claim 1 be allowed at an early date.

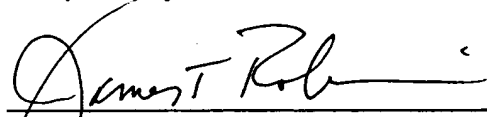
In the Drawings. 10 sheets of drawings include 12 new Figures. Each figure contains some new matter not contained in the original application.

In the specification. The new specification adds references to new FIGS. 1-17 in both the Brief Description of the Drawings and also in the Detailed Description.

In the claims. The proposed new claim is drawn to a **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp**.

In the abstract. The new Abstract conforms to the claimed invention.

Respectfully submitted,



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222 East Main Street
Norman, OK 73069-1303
Telephone (405) 292-1911
FAX (405) 321-1104

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Huggins, George M.)	Art Group:	Unknown
)		
App. No.:	Unknown)		
)		
For:	Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp)	Atty's D/N:	HUG107

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Group Director of Group

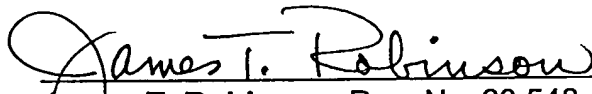
**PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL BECAUSE OF APPLICANT'S AGE
(37 CFR 1.102(c) and MPEP § 708.02 IV)**

Applicant hereby petitions to make this application special because applicant is over 65 years of age.

As a showing of this fact, accompanying this petition is:

a Declaration/Affidavit by the applicant that he is over 65 years of age

No fee is required with this petition in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.102(c).


James T. Robinson, Reg. No. 33,548
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ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
GEORGE M. HUGGINS, INVENTOR

USPS EXPRESS MAIL NO. EL-886-358-148-US
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. HUG107
PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL BECAUSE OF APPLICANT'S AGE— PAGE 1 OF 2


DECLARATION/AFFIDAVIT OF GEORGE M. HUGGINS

State of Oklahoma)
)
Cleveland County) ss.

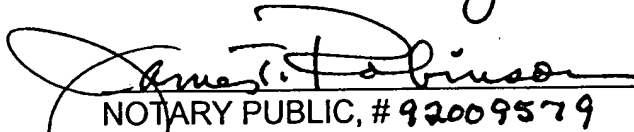
George M. Huggins, being first duly sworn, upon oath states:

1. I am the applicant for a patent for a **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp** in an application filed simultaneously herewith.
2. I was born on January 27, 1928.
3. I am over 65 years of age.
4. I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Further Affiant sayeth not.

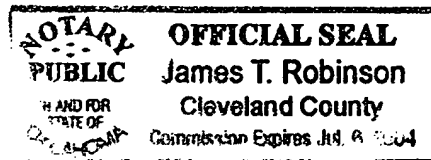

GEORGE M. HUGGINS
Applicant

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of February, 2004.


NOTARY PUBLIC, # 92009579

My Commission Expires:

07-06-2004



PICKUP TAILGATE LOADING RAMP
GEORGE M. HUGGINS, INVENTOR

USPS EXPRESS MAIL No. EL-886-358-148-US
ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. HUG107
PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL BECAUSE OF APPLICANT'S AGE- PAGE 2 OF 2

Best Available Copy

A continuation-in-part application filing (6 pages) for a **Pickup Tailgate Loading Ramp** has been received by the USPTO. The sole inventor is **George M. Huggins**, D/N HUG107, and the documents filed include a PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT (2 pages), a substitute Specification (12 pages), Claims (2 pages), Abstract (1 page), Formal drawings (10 pages), a COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY (3 pages), a PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL BECAUSE OF APPLICANT'S AGE (2 pages), Check No. 2219 in the amount of \$385.00 as a filing fee, documents filed in the parent application, and this receipt verification post card. Date received and Serial Number assigned to the application are those stamped hereon.

EXCLUSIVITY-LAW, INC.
222 EAST MAIN
NORMAN, OK 73069-1303
(405) 292-1911

FIRST FIDELITY BANK, N.A.
NORMAN, OK 73069
39-269/1030

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2/17/2004

PAY TO THE
ORDER OF **Commissioner of Patents & Trademarks**

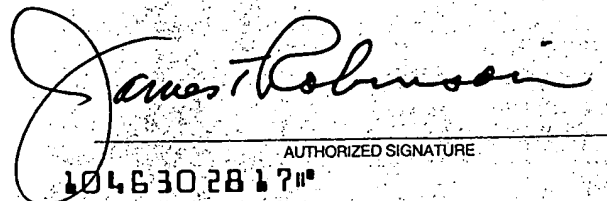
\$ **385.00**

Three Hundred Eighty-Five and 00/100*** DOLLARS**

Commissioner of Patents & Trademarks

MEMO

HUG107


AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

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